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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE amended resolution on Church Fellowship (not "Organisation") to be moved at the Bolton meeting of the National Conference, by the President, the Rev. Joseph Wood, and seconded by the Rev. C. J. Street, will be found on our leader page.

WE are asked to say that copies of the Rev. Joseph Wood's address on "The Federated Church," of which we gave an account in last week's *INQUIRER*, may be obtained on application to him at the Old Meeting Church, Bristol-street, Birmingham. Price 3d. each, including postage.

"SOME MEMORIES," by Robert Collyer, the publication of which in a volume is noticed in another column, affords pleasant glimpses of his second visit to the old country, after he had settled in America, when he came in 1871 to preach the annual sermon of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Dr. Collyer tells not only of the anniversary service in Essex-street Chapel, but of his preaching for Dr. Martineau in Little Portland-street Chapel, and for Mr. Gaskell, in Cross-street Chapel, Manchester. Then he adds:—"And for Charles Beard, in Liverpool, the son of the famous old doctor in divinity, preacher and teacher. Mr. Beard had written me here to preach for him, and I had told him when we should be due in Liverpool. We went, on landing, to the Adelphi; and, as I was inscribing our names, he stood near, and holding out his

hand, as I turned, he said, 'I am Mr. Beard.' His hair was white. I took him for the old doctor, and said presently, 'How is your son, sir?' And he answered promptly, 'I am my son.' And so we clasped hands."

WE confess to having read the debate on the Navy Estimates in the House of Commons this week with profound discouragement and sorrow. The insane rivalry of armaments, it seems, must go on. We must build against Germany. No moral consideration can come in. There can be no mutual understanding, no trust in anything but brute force. It is, as Sir John Brunner said in the House, "a sight to make the gods weep, that two great and reasonable nations should be discussing as to which should be ahead by a week or a month in the building of an ironclad." Thus millions upon millions are to be thrown into this mad race until one or other of the rivals is bankrupt; while the people sorely needing those millions for social betterment have to bear the crushing weight of the burden.

A NOTEWORTHY feature of the Evangelical Free Church Council meeting at Swansea was the innovation of placing women on the Executive (four being chosen), and another, the paper by the Rev. W. B. Selbie, Principal-elect of Mansfield College, on "Theological Unrest in Organised Churches." He said that progressive change held good not merely of life, but of thought. Unrest was life, stagnation death. As Christ spoke to men in terms of His time, so must His followers use the language and forms of their contemporaries. A knowledge of theology was not necessary for the life of the soul, but some form of theology or doctrinal statement was necessary to the organisation of the Church. In the discussion which followed the Rev. John McNeill indulged some cheap witticisms at the expense of New Theologians, which we regret to hear were "hugely enjoyed."

THE Rev. Joseph Hocking on Romanism, Dr. Lunn's criticism of Mr. Hocking, and an occasional letter from some other writer not complimentary to Dr. Lunn, make reading which to certain readers will be exciting, but not necessarily profitable. The records of the daily papers, military, naval, national, social, are not so satisfactory that one's energies require to be directed towards Rome in order to find something to war against. It was a Romanist who recently denounced the sins of the idle and luxurious, whose follies occupy so much time in the law courts,

and space that might be better used in the newspapers. Rome means to win England, we are told. Meantime, it will be an excellent thing for Protestants to try to make the country worth winning. If it is won as a country that seeks for peace and hates alike the cowardice of panic and the insolence of threats; if it be won as a country in which the newspapers, however subtly controlled, do nothing to bring about international misunderstandings and much to heal them; nothing to pander to vicious tastes and much to discourage them; nothing to excite sectarian strife and much to choke off the smoke of senseless hate; it will be a country worth gaining, and will require some skill to manage and improve.

A WRITER in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* contends that churches and ministers should abstain from politics, both national and ecclesiastical. Politics mean strife, he says, and "the servant of the Lord must not strive." So the dubious utterance of a questionable epistle is expected to arrest the arm raised to strike at some national abuse, and to paralyse the tongue that would denounce political folly. What a comfortable time the servant of the Lord would have as he quoted, for his consolation or justification, the advice of Marcus Aurelius, not to be disturbed, "for people will be untoward, and play the same pranks over again, though you should fret your heart out!" Do not protest against a policy of panic. If nations will run a mad race one against the other it is not likely that ours should be the first to set a better example; and it will disturb the equilibrium of your mind, and strain your voice, if you try to argue with people who think that no people on the earth has a greater right to be in a panic, and to act foolishly, than ours. While the people proceed on a wrong path, or while a section of the people is deliberately hindering the rest from attaining the right path, the church and the minister and the Sunday school teachers are to be still employed, one must understand, in spiritual work. They are devoting their efforts to saving souls. Meantime, as a young girl once innocently asked in a school, where there had been a great revival, "What will they do with all the souls when they have saved them?" If, when saved, they are too holy to strive with sin, too wise to join a crusade for the sake of opposing folly, too little occupied with the things of this world to be indignant at injustice, it is plain that their virtues are of a kind not available for this world. While, if they do oppose folly or sin or madness, even when committed by a whole nation, the day of con-

version will be the commencement of a ceaseless strife, as it should be.

THE economic position of the working classes is generally supposed to have improved in recent years because on the whole there has been an increase in wages. A comparison of prices of general groceries which has just been issued by the Co-operative Wholesale Society creates a different impression. It appears that the average increase in price of these necessities is nearly 10 per cent. between 1898 and 1908, while coal has gone up 33.05 per cent. The cost of woollen goods, after increasing 20 per cent., has come down to the same level as 1898, while cotton has become more expensive. It cannot be said truly that there has been a corresponding increase in the wages of the artisan or of the clerk, nor can we find evidence that ministers and curates have any average increase of salary corresponding to the greater cost of living.

A LONG lost report of the seventh of a course of lectures, on the "New system of Education," delivered by Coleridge, at Bristol at the White Lion Inn, November 18, 1813, is reproduced from *The Bristol Gazette* in last week's *Athenæum*. The "New System," was that of Dr. Bell, who became superintendent of the "National Society for the Education of the Poor." Coleridge's lecture deals largely with the advantages of the Monitorial system, and incidentally mentions that he himself was once "placed in the Dunce's row; because he found it easier to be beat than to say his Greek task." (But he was found by a clergyman musing over Virgil, which he had learnt to read before he went to that school, and thus "his deliverance was effected"). As to punishments Coleridge says: "Five minutes confinement from play would have more effect on boys than whipping; he was not an advocate for that, for he thought it did no good; but if it were necessary to bring up boys as Britons, who had, and might have again, to oppose the world, let them be brought up to despise pain, but above all to hate dishonour; to hold him who regards only the feeling of the moment, as a wretch and a coward." And finally the report runs: "The lecturer concluded with recommending an observance of the laws of Nature in the education of children; the ideas of a child were cheerful and playful; they should not be palsied by obliging it to utter sentences which the head could not comprehend, nor the heart echo; our nature was in every sense a progress; both body and mind."

The effort of the congregation at Ashton-under-Lyne, to raise £1,300 by the end of the present month, is commended to the generous consideration of friends. The bazaar to be held March 25-27 is advertised in another column. There is still a debt of £800 on the handsome new church, and another £500 is required for further necessary work to complete the equipment. The congregation, which is of the working class, has given and gives strenuous, self-denying labour to the good cause.

THE Rev. E. R. Hodges, of Tavistock, informs us that the lines which we quoted

last week, beginning "We believe in God's perfection," as used in the Sunday school, of the Adelaide Unitarian Church, South Australia, appeared a good many years ago in the *Chicago Unity*, as by A. J. R. This is the Rev. Adonizam Judson Rich, formerly of Milford, New Hampshire, and since 1899, at Dighton, Mass. Mr. Rich was ordained to the ministry in 1864. Both Mr. Hodges and two other correspondent send us the following lines, which, with those already quoted, complete the confession of faith as originally published:

"We believe religion's blessing is God's gift to every race;

That in every age true Prophets, Saviours, teachers we may trace.

We believe God's Revelation comes through all inspired souls,

May be read on Nature's pages, leaves and blossoms, sacred rolls.

We believe in Truth and Freedom as man's privilege below,

As his guide to larger wisdom and diviner life to know.

We believe that true salvation is to live the life divine,

And that heaven is, now and ever, where true love and goodness shine;

That the life is more than doctrine, how to live than how to die,

And that good deeds are the seedlets of the harvest fair on high.

That we build, while here, those mansions read of far beyond the skies,

And that Righteousness and Character are the keys to heaven's prize.

We believe in aspiration as the truest, holiest prayer,

That communion with the Father soothes our heart and lifts our care.

We believe in Life Immortal, since our souls from God have come,

That His love will e'er enfold us in His blessed, peaceful home;

That we all shall meet together, one unbroken family,

And shall know and love each other in that land beyond the sea."

THE Rev. C. W. Wendte is to sail by the Cunard s.s. *Ivernia* from Boston on June 1, and will report himself at Essex Hall about June 9 or 10. He is free to preach, we understand, on Sunday, June 13.

FAITH is the very life of the spirit; how shall we maintain it,—how increase it? By living it! Faith grows with well-doing. What little faith you have, only live it for one day and it will be stronger to-morrow. Live with your fellow-creatures as their brother to-day, and to-morrow God will be felt by you as your Father in heaven the more tenderly.—*W. Mountford*.

It is true that we need help in following the religious life, and that under the consciousness of sin and in our thirst for God we turn instinctively to nobler spirits than our own and seek their aid and guidance. It is here that Christ, whose influence with more or less fulness is perpetuated in Christian institutions, comes to our relief. He is a mediator, not in the sense of interposing between us and God, but as showing us the Father, and leading us, too, into the Sanctuary, where we may worship and listen for ourselves.—*James Drummond*.

A VOICE FROM THE ISLES.*

THE minister to whom we owe this suggestive little volume is very much alone we fear, in proclaiming the more liberal type of Christian faith in the Channel Islands. Judging from the selection of discourses published here his influence is rather likely to affect the thoughtful few than the popular crowd. The titles of some will suggest the general scope of the book; "Serving our Generation," "Christianity a need for men and Nations," "Via Crucis," "The Changing World," "The Christian Agnostic," so they run. There are twenty-two in all. The author has an eye for current events, and for the actual problems of daily life, and he offers his counsel and criticism with a sympathetic mind. Those who may have no chance to know him personally may profitably make his acquaintance through these pages. Their prevailing tone may be gathered from the following sentences:—

"A religion which is rational and real does not dispense with the necessity for righteousness, or make light of that sanctification on which the evangelical system insists. It does not sneer at what is good in other systems, but holds in reverence all that is sacred." (Page 56.)

"There is danger always of falling into extremes. Indifference on the one hand tempts us. In our reprobation of formalism we should be careful not to help in developing the Puritanical. They cannot be commended for judicious forethought who place the arguments of religion to the young in a light so unattractive as to make a reasonable call of duty a repulsive and unwilling service. It is not expedient, it is not good, to paint the things which belong to our peace in harsh and forbidding colours. The impression of gloom on sensitive and tender minds, by the pleading indiscreetly of a cause, however urgent, may be one which it will be difficult afterwards to efface." (Pages 115-116.)

GOD be thanked for books; they are the voices of the distant and the dead, and make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages. Books are the true levellers. They give to all, who will faithfully use them, the society, the spiritual presence of the best and greatest of our race.—*W. E. Channing*.

THERE is a large part of our moral life—the nutritive source indeed of it all—with which others cannot intermeddle, and which will only be parched up by their inspection, and lose all its fruit-bearing efficacy. It is the intimate and lonely passages of experience that consecrate or desecrate all the rest. The night-watches when the head is on the pillow but sleep deserts the eyes—the private hours when the door of the closet is shut and there is but One that seeth in secret; the inward record of the spirit, illuminated by glowing resolves or stained by mean motives, or blotted by effacing tears; the self-knowledge of lowered temper and fading purity, or of sweetened affections and serener trust—belong to a story which it were profane to breathe save to him who needs no words.—*James Martineau*.

* "Paul the Missionary, and other Studies." By the Rev. P. W. Quetteville, M.A. (Philip Green. 1909. 1 vol., pp. 265. Price 3s. 6d. net.)

THE GROWTH OF NATIONALITIES.*

MODERN history is history of which most people are ignorant. The events which are separated from us by only two generations are often less familiar to us than the Wars of the Roses or the politics of ancient Athens. We confess to some sympathy with the suggestion that history should be read backwards. The Reform Bill in our own country, or the great movements of nationality in Europe during the nineteenth century, have more significance for us, who have to apply the teaching of history to the problems of to-day, than the Norman Conquest, or the strife between Pope and Emperor in the Middle Ages. We do not undervalue the importance of what is distant, for history in every department is the most illuminating of all studies, but we plead for a juster sense of fitness and proportion, and more attention to what is near. The present instalment of the "Cambridge History" is from this point of view among the most important of the long series to which it belongs. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a volume in which there is anything like such a complete survey of the forces and events which have made the map of Europe what it is to-day, and fixed for us the lines of political activity and social advance. With this and Dr. Holland Rose's book on "The Development of the European Nations, 1870-1900," on his shelves the man of affairs will be well equipped. The period covered is only twenty-five years, 1845-1870, but there fell within it the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, the unification of Italy, and the foundation of modern Germany. The problems of Indian government, the fiscal question, and colonial policy, three of the most living issues of contemporary politics, are provided with their background of history. The long section on the Federation of Canada should have a special interest for purposes of comparison and contrast with the movement for union in South Africa, which is in progress at the present moment.

It is remarkable how little religious and theological forces enter into the constructive work of the period. There is a steady decline of ecclesiastical influence in secular politics. The chapter on the Vatican Council is the only one devoted to specifically ecclesiastical interests. We have had occasion in noticing previous volumes to refer to the rather sporadic treatment of literature in its relation to the development of national life. We are happy to say that this does not apply to the present volume. In addition to the chapters on English Literature by Professor H. Walker, and the Reaction against Romanticism in French Literature by Professor Émile Bourgeois, there are sections devoted to German Literature, the Literature of the *Risorgimento*, the National Spirit in Hungarian, Bohemian and Polish Literature, and the Literature of Russia and of Scandinavia. Another satisfactory feature of this volume is the number of foreign contributors, which gives it an atmosphere of cosmopolitan

scholarship. Where so much material has to be compressed into a limited space, it is perhaps hardly fair to complain that too little attention is paid by some of the writers to the art of writing. We know that it is not given to everybody to write scientifically and beautifully at the same time; but we should like to commend the following words by Professor Segré as worthy of careful attention. He is speaking of Carducci, a great modern literary figure, too little known in England: "Starting from the concrete study of literary facts, from the analysis of texts, from minute researches in archives and libraries, he rose to criticism of another nature, to æsthetic considerations, to wide and penetrating appreciations in which the artist joined hands with the scholar. He proved by his example, as no one had done before him, that there is not and cannot be any opposition between the æsthetic and historical schools of criticism. For him who estimates the critic's task at its highest, the two are blended into one. An opinion fails to convince if it is not based upon sound and carefully weighed premises. In the same way, learned researches fail of their effect if they are not clothed in the words of an artist, who sets them before our eyes in their true light, quickened by the spirit of the past." W. H. D.

ROBERT COLLYER'S "MEMORIES."*

MANY friends of Robert Collyer's in the old country will rejoice to have this volume of his "Memories," which he began to write at the time of his eightieth birthday, and which appeared originally in the *Christian Register*, in twenty-nine numbers, December 3, 1903—May 12, 1904, and February 23—April 6, 1905. They make a volume now, with another fine portrait, which it is good to be able to place side by side with the last volume of his selected sermons, "Where the Light Dwelleth"—twenty sermons, and the memoir by the Rev. Charles Hargrove. The "Memories" are not a systematic autobiography, but just memories of his first fifty years, recalled after another thirty years had passed. "May I say also," Dr. Collyer writes in a brief Foreword, "that they stole out from the mists of time by no effort of memory, but as if they had been waiting for those quiet mornings when they were written, I dare not say by inspiration from on high, but will say the inspiration of a grateful heart. I remember when my children were in their early 'teens' and would bring me to book now and then, as the little maid in the memories caught me about the pan of milk. My small son, who must have been turning over a sermon on my desk, said to me, 'Papa, do you write your sermons by what you call inspiration?' I answered, 'I hope so, my son'; and then he said, 'Why do you cross so much out?' He had caught me in a net, and I had not the mother wit to answer. There may be an inspiration to cross out as true as the inspiration to let the rest stay on the paper. And now I love to remember these memo-

ries ran clear from the first number to the last. There was no 'crossing out.' They were so interwoven with my life through the fifty years they touch, the sunshine and shadows, the sorrows and the joy."

The outlines of Mr. Hargrove's Memoir will be found delightfully enriched by these Memories. We shall not tell the story over again here, either of the early days of the Yorkshire lad and the young blacksmith or of his first experiences in America, his passing from the old Methodist Connexion to work among the Unitarians, his experiences of work for the Sanitary Commission during the tragic years of the Civil War, and then of the great fire in Chicago, the burning and rebuilding of his church. It must all be read in the book, and we will give simply one or two samples of the memories.

And first of the young blacksmith at Ilkley, with his passionate love of books:

"I had no dream," he writes, "of the worth which might lie in the hunger, any more than that I should sit here this morning touching these memories while the soft thunder of this great city steals through my library. The worth lay in the reading, in which not seldom I would 'plunge soul headlong impassioned by the beauty and salt of truth.' And I still remember how I would climb up to the moor on Sunday afternoons in the pleasant Summer time with some book—I always went to the old church in the morning—sit down on one great grey crag to read a chapter and to watch the sunshine ripple over the heather like a great translucent sea, and listen to the music of the bells in the dark old tower at Haworth meet and mingle with the music from the tower of our own church below, where the Longfellow worshipped through some centuries of time. Then something I had read would set me thinking and talking back, as we say, with no audience but the moor sheep looking up in wonder as they fed.

"Then the memory comes of a change through a great sorrow which befell me, when my life was dark in the shadows of death, for which I found no help in books and must find help in God. I did not consult with flesh and blood, not even with my dear friend and good helper, John. The whole experience seemed too sacred. The secret lay between God and my own soul, and seems still so sacred that I hesitate over these lines.

"But in about a month my heart was quiet. I had found rest in him, and then must needs find fellowship among those who were like-hearted; for the great woman well says: 'On solitary souls the universe looks down inhospitable, and the human heart finds nowhere shelter but in human kind.'

"There was a band of Methodists, my old neighbours and friends, who met in a small chapel. There I went and told them in not many words how it was with me. They wondered first and then gave me a warm welcome."

That great sorrow, to which he refers again later in the memories, was the death of his first wife, after only eighteen months together. Then telling of his early experience as a lay-preacher among the Methodists, he recalls the memory of one

* "The Cambridge Modern History." Vol. XI., pp. xl—1044. (Cambridge University Press, 16s. net.)

"Some Memories." By Robert Collyer. (Boston: American Unitarian Association). To be had at the Book Room, Essex Hall, 3s. net.

of the first services he took, in a farm kitchen:—

"It was in June. I see the place still, and am aware of the fragrance of the wild uplands stealing through the open lattice on bars of sunshine, to mingle with the pungent snap of the peat fire on the hearth which gives forth the essence of the moorlands for a thousand years. And I still mind how heavy my heart was that afternoon. I had been trying all the week to find a sermon in a parable, but there was no pulse to answer, no vision, and Bishop Horne says, 'If you distil dry bones, all you will have for your pains is water.'

"Still, there I was, *the preacher*, and they were simple-hearted folk up there, of the old Methodist election unto grace, eager, and hungry for the word of life, and ready to come in with the grand Amens.

"The big farm kitchen was full, and they were just the hearers to help a poor soul over the sand bars on the lift of their full hearts. So they sang with a will; and where in all the world will you hear such singing with a will as in Yorkshire and Lancashire! Then I must pray. Father Taylor said, 'I cannot *make* a prayer,' nor can I. But, with those hearts filled from the springs of life, I felt that day the prayer was making me. Then the time came for the sermon. Some stammering words came to my lips, and then some more, while gleams of light began to play about my parable. And their eyes began to shine while now and then the grand Amens came in as a chorus from the chests of men who talked to each other in the teeth of the winds up there from the times of the Saxons and the Danes. And now, after all these years, I feel sure it was given me that day what I should say.

"So the service ended, and the good man of the house came, laid his hands on me, and said very tenderly: 'My lad, the Lord has called thee to preach the Gospel. The Lord bless thee and make thee faithful in the truth.' And all the people said Amen, while I have always said that this was my true ordination."

One more memory, of the war time, of the journey down from Chicago with other helpers, to minister to the wounded:—

"A larger number volunteered to go, and we lost no time speeding down to Cairo and then up the river. They had elected me to be captain of the company, because, as they said, I knew the ropes. Brother Moody, with some ministers in the Christian Commission, was in the company; and, as we went up the river, he said to me: Brother Collyer, we are going to hold a prayer meeting in the saloon. Will you come in and join us? Gladly, I answered, and went. Early in the meeting he made an address to us, of which the burden was that we were going to the battle-field to save souls, many of those men would die in their sins. He did not say they would go to hell, but this was the clear inference if we did not save them.

"When he sat down, I rose to my feet and said, Brother Moody is mistaken: we are not going there to save the souls of our soldiers, but to save their lives and leave their souls in the hands of God. Our

work would be this we had done at Fort Donelson; and I outlined the work—to comfort them with tender words, lay on the soft linen and cold water, wash them and see by all means to their help and healing. The great first thing was the nursing back to life, and this we must do.

"There was a dead silence when I sat down, and then a brother minister from Chicago rose and said: This is the way the Unitarians always go to work, from the surface inwards; but we go directly to the heart first, and then work out to the surface, ending where they begin. We must do the one thing and not leave the other undone—warn the sinner, pray with him, and point him to *the thief on the cross*.

"I rose on the instant when he sat down and said: My friends, we know what those men have done, no matter who or what they are. They left their homes for the camp and the battle, while we stayed behind in our city. They endured hardness like good soldiers, while we were lodged softly. They have fought and fallen for the flag of the Union and all the flag stands for, while here we are safe and sound. I will not doubt for a moment the sincerity of my friend and yours who has just spoken; but I will say for myself that I should be ashamed all my life long if I should point to the thief on the cross in speaking to these men, or to any other thief the world has ever heard of. And when I sat down, there was a roar of applause.

"And now another memory links in with this. About a year before Brother Moody was taken to his well-won rest and reward, I was standing one morning on a platform of the elevated, waiting for a train, when a hand was laid on my shoulder from behind, and, turning, there was Brother Moody! I had not met him since that day on the way to Pittsburg Landing. There was a smile now on his honest face, I was glad to notice; and with no word of preface, he said, You were all wrong that day in the saloon. And I answered, Old friend if I was ever all right in my life, it was in that afternoon on the steamer; and, if we must all answer for the deeds done in the body, my answer will be ready, and *don't you forget it!* We parted then, and I saw him to speak to him no more."

And here is the final word as to these Memories:—

"It has been a pleasant task for me to write them, sweet as they are or bitter, or bitter sweet, as they would steal out from the mists of the many years. The good Bishop Horne says, Wormwood eaten with bread is not bitter; and these are all blended for me now with the bread of life of my childhood, my youth, and my manhood through the fifty years all told when they close. Thirty-two years more have come and gone since then; but of these I cannot tell you now (and cannot means need not to me), as I glance towards my sun's setting and remember the saying, The young may die soon, but the old must. Still I am glad to stay so long as I may, while in some rare moments I must confess I feel some touch of eagerness to go when I am held captive by the vision of my beloved waiting for me, my very own and so many more, where mortality is swallowed up of life."

ANDREA DEL SARTO'S FRESCOES.

SCARCELY more than a stone's-throw from the old monastery of San Marco, once so famous in the history of Florence and now well known as the museum of Fra Angelico's paintings, the lover of art may find in a quiet corner the Scalzo cloisters.

These less-known cloisters are decorated with frescoes, which, though differing widely from those of the artist-monk, are no less beautiful in their own way. Admission to see them is gained by ringing the bell at a door which appears to be very similar to many others in the same street; but once through that door, what a change from the outside world! Leaving behind the somewhat noisy traffic, the modern electric tramcars, and the busy, jostling foot-passengers, we find ourselves in a small but well-proportioned court, with colonnades all round, where two young artists painted the walls with frescoes four hundred years ago.

This court belonged to the Scalzi, or barefooted friars, a brotherhood which was suppressed in the eighteenth century; at the beginning of the sixteenth century the monks wished to have their cloisters decorated, and employed Andrea del Sarto and his friend, Francia Bigio. Andrea was then about twenty-three years old, and was painting with all the energy of youth, added to his wonderful natural gifts.

The twelve frescoes which cover the walls of the court represent scenes from the life of John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence. All the twelve, as well as the beautiful figures of Faith, Hope, Justice and Charity, which complete the decoration by filling the spaces of wall between the scenes, were painted entirely in light and dark shades of brown, so that on entering the court the effect of the whole place strikes one as most harmonious. Unfortunately these frescoes have been a good deal injured, though not enough to prevent one from judging of their admirable grace and vigour, nor to spoil the general effect of the place. Of the twelve scenes represented, Andrea painted nine, Francia Bigio two, and one, the "Baptism of Christ," was designed and painted by the two artists together. The four "Virtues" were Andrea's work.

It is difficult to say that one fresco is more beautiful than another where all are so attractive and so well worth studying; but perhaps the two that most appeal to one for beauty of design, for grace and harmony, and for a touch of religious inspiration, which is often lacking in Andrea's later paintings, are "The Preaching of the Baptist" and "The Baptizing of John's Disciples."

In the first of these two the Baptist is painted standing on a rising knoll of ground, in the centre of the picture, a manly figure with a grave and earnest face, addressing the few hearers who are gathered round him, and evidently attracting their attention by his new teaching. It is only a little crowd of poor and tired people, sitting and standing round, who look up and seem to drink in eagerly the message he has for them. This is a picture that touches one's heart, and brings to mind Ruskin when he says that he could wish a preacher's words "to be simple, and the place from which he speaks like

a rock in the desert, about which the people have gathered in their thirst."

The "Baptizing of John's Disciples" is equally fine, with beautiful landscape background, strength and grace shown in the figures, and reverence in the expression of the faces. "The Benediction of Zacharias," which is one of the two painted by Francia Bigio, is hardly less fine than Andrea's frescoes, and is charming in its combination of domestic simplicity and suggestion as to the vocation of the young Baptist. In a hall, or vestibule, the youthful St. John kneels with bowed head to receive his father's blessing. Zacharias stands in the act of lifting his right hand, but bends down a little, as if with desire to be nearer to the very loveable little boy before him. The mother, sitting close by, is painted with a steadfast sad expression on her fine though middle-aged face; and servants stand looking on, two in the door-way and two looking over from the staircase. Through another door which stands open, one can see the country beyond, with a narrow path leading away into distance, along which St. John is toiling. It was a favourite plan amongst the old painters to introduce a second episode into a picture, and in this case it shows the Baptist leaving his house after receiving his father's blessing, and setting out upon his mission.

Besides these "Brown Frescoes," as they are commonly called in Florence, Andrea and Francia Bigio painted some of the frescoes in the court, or "atrium," of the church of the Annunziata, and two of these, the "Visit of the Magi" and the "Birth of the Virgin," are considered as fine as any work that Andrea ever produced. Here his rich delicate colours are unspoiled; in the "Birth of the Virgin" all the figures are nobly drawn, and the soft tints of the draperies, grey and lilac, red and brown, are as purely beautiful as anything one can see in fresco painting.

A story is told that when a few years later another artist was copying this picture, a very old lady paused on her way into the church to look at the copy, and, pointing to one figure in the fresco, said it was her own portrait and that she had been Andrea's wife.

Andrea himself died at the age of forty-four. He was the last of the great Florentine painters, having been born in 1486, a little later than Titian and Giorgione, Michael Angelo and Raphael. He was a very great master and one of the most perfect of colourists; and yet, high as his pictures rank, they do not entirely satisfy one, as do those of some of the other masters. Judging from what is known of his married life, it seems that his proud and jealous wife, Lucrezia, constantly hindered and thwarted, instead of helping and inspiring him, as she might have done had she been a nobler woman. Thus Andrea became in later life disheartened and saddened, and his painting, though technically so perfect, lacked the divine fire. There is, however, nothing of this sadness in his early paintings, and his frescoes are not only wonderfully beautiful, but one feels that they are fully worthy of the Florentine "faultless painter."

KATHARINE F. LAWFORD.

Clarens, February, 1909.

A BUNCH OF DAFFODILS.

OF all the shops that interest me, I think I love the florist's the best. The blaze of colour in the window, where, fresh from the country, the spring flowers are displayed in all their dewy freshness, bunches of violets, white orange-eyed narcissi, and more beautiful than all—if one flower can be said to be more beautiful than another—great clusters of daffodils bring to my mind thoughts lit with the sunshine that lights the meadows, and fragrant with the promise and sweetness of an April day.

What though the sky is grey, and the air is filled with snowflakes, and the bitter east wind drives down the street, somewhere the heavens are blue, and the daffodils are "dancing in the breeze"; the pale primroses are peeping between the brambles and the dead bracken; and the purple and white violets are opening their fairy petals to the light. Through the open door is wafted the sweetness that these early blossoms have drawn from the earth, a freshness and strength that the narcissi have received from the sea; the daffodils have stolen something from the soft showers and the sunshine.

The earth and the air have given their beauty to the flowers, and these, having gathered it to themselves, give it again to the world.

This bunch of daffodils I carry home, and put them in a vase on my table. What pen can describe them? What artist reproduce the delicate tints of the petals, the subtle colour that deepens and grows richer as it shades away into the golden heart of each flower? There are no words to tell the grace of the beautiful blossoms poised so perfectly on their slender stems. The thoughts conveyed to the soul by the beauty of a flower, or some passing expression on a woman's face, cannot be repeated save in faltering accents that but ill express the mystery that throbs like music at the heart of all things pure and lovely.

There are a chosen few whose ears are ever open to receive this silent music, whose eyes see beyond the beauty of the thing itself to that which it symbolises; but what can the greatest of these tell us? A broken melody, a dozen lyrics—a few high words that say much, but leave so much unsaid—are all that the poets dare to whisper of that which they have heard, seen, and felt, but tried in vain to express.

Is this why supreme works of art are almost as mysterious as nature herself, and the soul of man and the soul of nature must remain a riddle till the end? So much greater is silence than speech. Can we wonder that poets love these "Lenten lilies that die at Eastertide"? There are things beautiful in themselves, but doubly so because of their suggestiveness. Among such, flowers must surely be given the first place, and of all, there are none that possess this mysterious power, the power of speaking to the soul, and of recalling dear memories, and dearer associations, more than daffodils.

As I gaze at them, my thoughts fly back to an Easter holiday that I spent in Somerset. Easter fell early that year, and the spring was late; yet on the banks in the lanes there were many primroses, and the birds were busy building. I

walked with a friend for many miles through a driving northerly wind, that chased white puffy clouds over a coldly blue sky, and sometimes blew the stinging sleet showers in our faces, and yet I would not willingly forget that day of mingled sun and shower. There was a freshness in the air that was very invigorating, and I remember well with what pleasure we saw, when we rested by an orchard gate, the yellow daffodils swinging in the wind beneath leafless apple trees. They were growing, too, on the banks in the lanes, hidden beneath the bushes, where, like so many beautiful things, they could not be seen unless looked for. We walked up a steep road where the pools mirrored the sky, till we came to a high open down. I hope I shall never forget the view, or the colours in the distance that lay before us. If you wish to see nature at her best, do not select a cloudless summer day, but choose rather a time when the wind is high and the clouds are moving swiftly across the sky. An April morning of smiles and tears, or a breezy afternoon late in the autumn, will give you a greater variety of colour, and light and shade effects than any blazing day of mid-June.

Far in the distance stretched the Quantock Hills, their summits silver in the sunshine, for the sleet in the valley had been snow on the hills, or fading to purple and ultramarine where the shadows of the clouds lay. We could see the storms in the distance, veils of vapour that moved across the horizon in grey streaks that hid portions of the distant hills.

Between the Quantocks and ourselves, the Valley of the Taun lay like a map, and, as the flying clouds concealed or revealed the sun, great waves of light and shadow swept across the far-stretching fields. Then the north wind gathered the clouds together, as a shepherd gathers his sheep, and the sky became grey and the hills and meadows were blotted out in a smother of falling sleet. When we returned to the valley the wind had cleared the sky, and the night was setting in frostily, and, lying in the mud of the road, we saw daffodils that careless children had gathered and thrown away. Ah, yes! the daffodils; there they are before me as I write, and they have carried my thoughts back to an almost forgotten April day.

There are now many varieties of cultivated daffodils sold in the shops, and by the girls at the street corners. They are all beautiful, but I love the wild ones best, those that Herrick wrote of, and that Wordsworth saw when he "wandered, lonely as a cloud" beside the lake.

For the wild flowers, the primroses, the violets, and the daffodils have the power which no hothouse blossom, however lovely, possesses, of filling the mind with beautiful thoughts, associations, and memories. And they are essentially English. We know that Chaucer and Shakespeare loved them, and that the children who play in the English lanes love them to-day.

J. W. NORGROVE.

EVERY generous action, every honest thought, every sincere effort to do right, is really a part of the worship of God.—
J. F. Clarke.

OBITUARY.

MR. HOLBROOK GASKELL, J.P.

MEMORIAL SERVICES.

THE funeral service of the late Mr. Holbrook Gaskell, at Cairo-street Chapel, Warrington, on Thursday, March 11, was attended by a large and representative gathering of friends. The service was conducted by the Rev. C. Harvey Cook (minister of the chapel), and J. C. Hirst, of Gateacre. The hymns were "O God our help in ages past," and "God giveth quietness at last."

In the course of an address, Mr. Hirst spoke of Mr. Gaskell as a strong man, and marked personality, and paid a high tribute to his great capacity in business, but then continued:—

But though a business man of an exceptional order, his interests were never restricted to business. At no time was he engrossed by money-making to the exclusion of finer and higher pursuits. Happily for him he grew up under influences which led to his early and active participation in the life of a Christian Church. Alluding to his early association with the Rev. James Martineau, who was then minister of Hope-street Church, Liverpool, Mr. Hirst said those experiences were things on which Mr. Gaskell loved to dwell, but chiefly because they showed that when his career was opening he cared for other interests than those of a business kind. His later years supplied abundant evidence to that effect. He was a man with what had been called a 'public soul.' His concern for the community showed itself in many directions.

Speaking later of Mr. Gaskell's great generosity, Mr. Hirst said:—

"Nor was money the only thing he gave. So long as he was able he would give personal trouble and personal kindness, which added a wonderful value to the material benefit. His picture gallery and certain parts of his estate were freely opened to visitors. On such occasions it was delightful to see Mr. Gaskell, when he was far beyond fourscore, conducting a party of teachers and elder scholars round the gallery, talking in a most interesting and simple way about the pictures, and relating incidents in the lives of the artists under notice. His munificence caused an extreme militant type of Socialist to exclaim: 'Well, if all rich men used their wealth as Mr. Gaskell does, a good deal of wind would be taken out of our sails. He uses his riches as if he were a trustee for his fellow men.' As to religion Mr. Gaskell was a life-long and convinced Unitarian, and was faithful and loyal to that part of the Christian Church with which his own mind was most fully in accord. But he was tolerant of persons with dissimilar theological convictions, and was ready to recognise and appreciate the good works of other churches. His friendly help for the poor and the young was never sought in vain, whatever their creed. A strong, clear-sighted man with an inflexible will and definite opinions, he was occasionally abrupt in manner, but behind this was an upright soul and a tender heart."

On Sunday morning, at Gateacre Chapel a memorial service was held, and the Rev. J. Crowther Hirst again spoke of Mr.

Gaskell, and referred in conclusion to the fact that he was a staunch and faithful Unitarian, never hiding his convictions even in days when their avowal was less popular than at the present time. But his sympathies were not restricted to those of his own form of faith, and one thing he could not tolerate was intolerance. He placed the emphasis on religion rather than on theology, and his desire was that in their churches the critical and controversial element should be less and less in evidence, and the devotional and worshipful spirit cherished and strengthened.

The Bishop of Liverpool, preaching at the Woolton Parish Church on Sunday morning, also paid a high tribute to Mr. Gaskell's memory.

MR. ALFRED H. PAGET.

THE death of Mr. Alfred H. Paget, of Leicester, on Sunday last, has come as a shock to his many friends, for although in somewhat delicate health for several years past, he was following his usual occupations, both business and social, only three days previously. During the night of Thursday, the 11th inst., he was seized with acute pain, and notwithstanding every effort and the surgical operation deemed imperative, he gradually sank, and passed peacefully away late on Sunday evening.

Alfred Henry Paget was born at Leicester in 1848, and was the second son (and youngest but one) of the family of the late Alfred Paget, J.P., of Leicester. He received his education at a local and well-known private school and afterwards at University College, London. He chose an architect's profession, and was placed for several years in the office of the late Mr. Henry Darbyshire and afterwards in that of Messrs. Cubitt, builders, both of London. On taking up his profession he entered into partnership with the late Mr. Joseph Goddard, of Leicester, and has ever since been associated with that firm. In 1876 he married Jeanie, eldest daughter of the late Edwin Clephan, J.P., of Leicester, and for her in her sudden loneliness the deepest sympathy will be universally felt.

Like his father, Mr. Paget was an ardent lover of nature and the picturesque. He delighted in travel and scenery, and was equally happy in sojourning in remote resting-places among the Swiss Mountains or in enjoying the glories of architecture and the quaint nooks and corners of great cities, frequently sending to his friends vivid descriptions or telling little sketches by pen or pencil. In this connection must be mentioned his love of country rambles, and keen interest in protecting the rights of pedestrians in the neighbourhood of Leicester, as an active member of the Footpath Association.

This appreciation of beauty and excellence was the key-note of his character. It permeated him through and through, and not only enriched his own enjoyment of life, but inspired him with admiration for the good and the true he found in all around him. He endeavoured to promote the cultivation and refinement of the public, and ever since the formation of the Leicester Kyrle Society, thirty years ago, was its active secretary, and had the satisfaction of seeing many a rough corner

softened, and many a bare wall in the schools and institutions of the town beautified by its various agencies.

In all forms of art Mr. Paget was by a nature a connoisseur. He was a member of the Society of Architects, of the Leicestershire and Rutland Architectural and Archaeological Society, of the Leicester Society of Artists, and was on the committee of the Leicester School of Art. But the study of the drama was his greatest delight, and from early youth stage representation and, later on, the portrayal of character was almost a passion with him. He went to the fountain-head of dramatic literature, and made the plays and characters of Shakespeare his special study, delighting his friends and giving expression to his dramatic instincts by occasional public representations. Many of these Shakespearean recitals were given to the members of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society, of which he had once been president. His great power of memory, his assimilation of the moods and motives of his characters and variety of tone with which he delivered passages, tender or vindictive, melancholy or gay, never failed to appeal to his audience, and to make each character "live" in their imagination. He was also a student of the plays and poetic literature of later times, and his graceful recitation of many a dainty poem has often charmed a fireside circle of friends, while many a favourite "part" has been taken by him as chief of a little band of amateur players whom he drew around him, and who looked to him for guidance and instruction in the actor's art, which he so well understood.

But Mr. Paget will be most lamented and best remembered, not for his gifts, but for his rare and tender personality, for his innate courtesy and unselfishness, his reverence for that all is lovely and of good report, and for devotion to duty. To know him was to love him, and strangers have felt the magnetic charm of his voice and manner, and claimed him as a friend. To a little circle of intimates he was almost more than a brother, and their devotion to him was as touching as it was real and unusual.

Mr. Paget had always been a worshipper at the Great Meeting, and for several years filled the office of chairman of its Vestry. He was for more than forty years a teacher in the Great Meeting Sunday School. He was president of the North Midland Presbyterian and Unitarian Association at the time of his death, and for many years represented Leicester on the committee of the Ministers' Benevolent Society. He was also a member of the Hibbert Trust, and took the keenest interest in the religious life of our community.

The funeral took place on Thursday last, after cremation, the service being conducted by the Rev. Henry Gow and the Rev. Edgar I. Fripp.

EVERY day we are to prepare, not for death, but for life; for, if we live well and wisely here, we may certainly trust God as to our hereafter.—*J. F. Clarke.*

ERRATUM.—In the notice last week of the late Rev. R. Holden line 20, for "colliers" read "cottiers."

THE LATE REV. FRANK WALTERS.

A FINAL advertisement appeared in our issue of March 6, of the proposal to erect by public subscription a memorial stone over the grave of the Rev. Frank Walters, in Whitley churchyard, the treasurer of the fund being Mr. George G. Laidler, 40, Northumberland-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Of the result of this appeal we have not yet heard, but a tribute of a different kind to the memory of Mr. Walters has reached us from a distant friend.

Mr. Edwin Cox, of Hall-street, Cambridge, New Zealand, recalls the early ministry of Mr. Walters at Preston. He had himself been induced to go and hear Mr. Walters, in 1874, and had made his acquaintance. And when towards the close of the year he suffered from a severe and prolonged illness, though not a member of the congregation, Mr. Walters came regularly to see him every week. Not with many words but with deep sympathy and insight Mr. Walters ministered to the sufferer's needs, and most effectually through his prayers. "Of course, I admired him," writes Mr. Cox, "and was deeply impressed by him as a preacher, yet the secret of his spell over my gratitude and reverence and affection, lies in those visits to the sick chamber, and those prayers of faith and hope, and love! Need I say, that when in the pulpit the (as some might say) apparently insignificant-looking man in the street stood transformed!"

There was, indeed, in his preaching the true prophetic power. This is the testimony of his friend:—"He sought and he received his message from 'the Eternal Life,' and it lay upon his heart as the burden of the Lord until he had delivered it as such, and with the implicit confidence and vehemence of the prophets of Israel. Fear, doubt, were absolutely excluded, and his appeals to the moral and spiritual nature were irresistible. He seemed impatient of intellectual path-laying, at least at times, and like the poet and the dramatist he was, he rushed forwards to scale and carry 'the City of Mansoul,' the surrender of the heart, the response of the filial spirit to its Creator-Spirit. And he had the self-excluding humility, and at times the deep depression of the prophets. He did not attract the multitude, I know, but in that most conservative and ecclesiastical town of proud Preston,—a Jerusalem of so-called 'orthodoxy,'—he attracted at least a few intelligent co-workers and up-lifted the banner, and the public position of Unitarianism to a recognition it had never before secured. In truth, Mr. Walters was himself unspeakably more and better than a proselytising sectarian. The thought was hateful to him. He loved the truth above all things for its own sake. He felt the truth had made him free, and that he was sent to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the poor, and to open the prison doors to those who were bound.

"Among my many privileges and responsibilities throughout a long life, I regard my knowledge and friendship with Mr. Frank Walters as one of the greatest, and I beg to lay this lowly tribute of gratitude and fidelity upon his grave."

Do not think of one falsity as harmless.—*Ruskin.*

THE CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

THERE is a hymn that I expect a great many of you know, and have often sung at home or at school. These are the last four lines of each verse:—

"This world is full of beauty,
The coldest hearts to move,
And if we did our duty
It might be full of love."

These are beautiful lines, but I should like to alter the last two, though they would not then fit in with the tune. Our duty is what we owe, or ought to do, but it would be rather a dull, cold world if we only did what we ought to do. I should like to sing "if we did a little more than our duty, and did it cheerfully and lovingly, then the world must be full of love."

How many of you children have a pet—a dog or a cat—or perhaps some very lucky children have a donkey or a pony? It is your duty to see that whatever pets you have are well fed and kept clean, and have a comfortable place in which to sleep. If you did all that, your dog or your cat might be quite fond of you, but if you only did that, would your dog come bounding to meet you and bark and wag his tail till you really think it will come off when you come home from school, or after being away for a time? Would your cat rub herself affectionately against your legs, or your pony whinny when he catches sight of you? It is because besides doing your mere duty you have also loved these creatures and been kind to them in many ways over and above your duty that they show in their way their love for you.

It is the duty of those of you who go to school to be there in time and to be attentive while you are in class; but besides doing this you sometimes take flowers for your teacher. How pleased she looks when you give them to her, and, though you do not think about it at the time, the world is a brighter place and fuller of love because you have done more than your duty.

Have you noticed how the drivers of trams and omnibuses give each other a cheery greeting as they pass on the road? A tram by which I often go, as it nears the town goes along a wide busy street, which is crossed by another wide street with trams and heavy drays passing up and down. In the middle, just where the streets cross, stands a policeman to direct the traffic. Though he is so busy doing his duty, as he signs to the car driver to go on, he finds time to smile and nod, so that, though the buildings on either side are so high that they keep out the sunshine he brings a gleam of human sunshine into this rather dull street. "Yes," said an old gentleman to a friend of mine, "down here we grease the wheels before we start." My friend had been remarking on the kindness and friendliness he had met with in a town where he had gone, a perfect stranger, to live for a short time. What did he mean by "greasing the wheels" before starting?

How many of you live in towns and start off on your railway journeys from big, busy stations? How exciting it is! The train is up at the platform. Passengers are choosing their carriages, porters with luggage, ticket collectors, and others are all helping to send off trains, or to receive

them as they come into the station. And while you are waiting you will see men in greasy overalls going down the whole length of the train. They each carry a big hammer, with which they tap the wheels as they pass, and into a little box on the wheels they put a lump of something that looks like very yellow butter. This is train oil, and it is this that makes the wheels run so smoothly as the train rushes on its way. Everyone in this world is making a journey which we call life, and sometimes the journey is very difficult, but little acts of kindness or a smile and a cheery word help to make the wheels run more smoothly and the travelling easier for all.

Here is a story of an old man whose world was full neither of beauty nor love. He lived by himself in one room and earned money by mending shoes. He was very poorly paid, but in spite of this he might have been very happy and had friends who cared for him, but he was so disagreeable and grumpy that people who used to be kind and try to cheer him had ended by leaving him alone. His room was an untidy, uncomfortable place, the windows so dirty that no sunbeams ever came in to greet the old cobbler. One evening when resting in his armchair and grumbling at his hard life, a beautiful lady with golden hair appeared, and told him that sunbeams lived in bright, clean places, and in the brave and grateful hearts of those who loved their heavenly Father, and through love for him helped and loved their fellow creatures. If he would catch a sunbeam, he must set a trap and bait it with Love, Faith, Hope, and Content. She vanished as quickly as she came, leaving the cobbler thinking of what she had said. At any rate he thought he could have his room clean, so the next morning he asked a neighbour, who had often longed to help him to come and clean his room. Meanwhile he took a pair of boots he had been mending back to their owner. But he found the man ill and almost starving, so, knowing he had a little money at home, he refused to take any pay for them, and went away with the sick man's blessing ringing in his ears. The story goes on to tell how the old cobbler found there was something more in the world besides his daily duty of mending shoes, for the love and kindness now shown to him he found he could pass on to others. One day he saved the life of a girl whose horse had bolted with her; another day he took home a child he found lost in the street, and the girl and the mother of the child (for after much anxiety she found where her boy was) became his friends for life. Thus love and beauty came into his life; sunbeams shone in his room (cosy and tidy now, and with bright plants in the window) and love's sunshine was in his heart, for he was learning to live for others, and not for himself alone. You may be quite sure, too, that his daily work, which had been simply drudgery before, became something far pleasanter and very different from "bare duty," because now he had learnt the secret of unselfishness.

JANET B. SMITH.

Do not squander time, for time is the stuff of life.—*Franklin.*

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LONDON, MARCH 20, 1909.

THE PRESIDENT'S RESOLUTION.

THE letters with reference to the National Conference, which we publish this week, bring the welcome intelligence that an understanding has been arrived at in regard to the resolution of which the President, the Rev. JOSEPH WOOD, had given notice, and the amendment of the Rev. C. J. STREET. The resolution has been so modified that Mr. STREET is willing to accept it, and become its seconder.

It will be seen that the resolution, instead of asking for "a more vital organisation" of the churches of our communion, now aims at "effective co-operation" and "more vital fellowship." It will not have "a scheme of organisation," but "a plan for carrying out" the objects named. To this end the Conference Committee is to be instructed to consult with various societies and unions, and to consider all the questions involved, including those raised by the President's suggestions. Incidentally the resolution repudiates on behalf of the Conference "any assumption of ecclesiastical authority," and expresses a determination to maintain "the ancient liberties of the churches." Those two clauses simply put into express words what Mr. WOOD clearly affirms in his address on "The Federated Church," and guard against what appear to us purely imaginary dangers. The acceptance of this amended resolution at the Conference will, in our view, be much more useful than a fight over the original resolution and amendment. It will lead, as we may trust, to a thoroughly practical inquiry, and a serious effort of advance towards a more vital fellowship among the churches. Whether this fellowship, on the practical side, is called "organisation" or not, and whether the blessed word "ecclesiastical" is allowed to come in at all (a word often fraught with quite unreasoning prejudice in our connection), the fact remains that one of our deepest needs is to realise more fully the meaning and the obligations of religion in the fellowship of church life, both in the union of the single congregation and in the larger field, whether provincial or national, of the union of our free churches.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. LETTERS CANNOT BE INSERTED WITHOUT THE WRITER'S NAME, and all private information should be accompanied by the name and address of the senders.]

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

THE PRESIDENT'S RESOLUTION.

SIR,—It will be to the general convenience that the enclosed correspondence should be published at the earliest opportunity, and I shall therefore be much obliged if you will be good enough to insert it in your next issue.

[COPY LETTER.]

120, Gough-road,
Birmingham, March 16.

DEAR MR. HARWOOD,—In consultation with Mr. Street and a committee of the Ministerial Fellowship, I have agreed to amend the wording of the Resolution I am to move at the Bolton meeting. I enclose the amended form, and shall be glad if you will give it the necessary publicity. Without altering the substance of my Resolution, the changes introduced are intended to remove certain misconceptions which have arisen, and to guard against any possible encroachment on our cherished freedom. Mr. Street will, I understand, withdraw his amendment and second the amended Resolution.

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) JOSEPH WOOD.

THE RESOLUTION.

"That in view both of the changed conditions of the age and the pressing need of our Churches for a closer and more practical fellowship whereby the strength of the strong shall be more readily held at the service of the weak, and mutual effectiveness developed in a quickened sense of unity, this Conference, while avoiding any assumption of ecclesiastical authority and resolved upon the maintenance of the ancient liberties of the Churches, is of opinion that the time is opportune for a resolute effort to secure effective co-operation among our institutions, and to bring the Churches into a more vital fellowship, and instructs the Conference Committee to prepare and present to the Conference a plan for the carrying out of these objects.

"That the Committee of the Conference is accordingly instructed to consult with the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the managers of the Stipend Augmentation and Sustentation Funds, and the committees of the local associations, by means of joint committees of these bodies for special purposes, and in any other way that may be deemed desirable, with a view to a full consideration of all the questions involved, including the suggestions now made by the President."

I have had a corresponding letter from the Rev. C. J. Street confirming the above.

March 16.

JAMES HARWOOD.

SIR,—At a meeting of the Ministerial Fellowship, held on February 25, of which all the members received notice, a wish was unanimously expressed that a common understanding might be arrived at with

regard to the Resolution by the Rev. Joseph Wood and the amendment by the Rev. C. J. Street, of which notice has been given, for the Bolton Conference. Both these gentlemen attended.

A small committee was therefore appointed for private consultation, and I am glad to say that, as a result of their deliberations, Mr. Wood and Mr. Street agreed to withdraw both Resolution and amendment, and to move and second respectively the amended Resolution, of which a copy has been sent to you.

The Resolution in this form is cordially commended for support not only to all members of the Ministerial Fellowship, but to all other ministers and delegates who may be present at the Conference. If adopted, as I earnestly hope it will be, it will tend to "unity, peace, and concord."

DENDY AGATE,

President of the Ministerial Fellowship.
March 15. Dunham-road, Altrincham.

ORGANISATION.

SIR,—The announcement which is to appear in this issue of the amicable arrangement which has been arrived at through the instrumentality of the Ministerial Fellowship by means of which Mr. Wood's resolution has been so altered (and, as I think, improved) that I shall be able to second it with cordiality instead of moving an amendment, will doubtless be received with mingled feelings by some of your readers, though most will hail it with joy. That it has been found possible so to frame the resolution as to minimise our admitted differences and emphasise the points on which we really agree is surely a testimony to the fact that there are not so many irreconcilables among us as some would have us suppose, and that our real aims are much the same though our methods may be different. If we are to fight and divide, let it be not on empty names, but on definite proposals, such as are not yet before us. And it may be that, when we bring the representatives of our various institutions together to confer and compare notes and exchange counsels, we may find all impracticable proposals ruled out, and only such plans suggested as will enable us to work together for the common cause, instead of wasting time and temper in idle talk.

But such articles as that which Mr. Lloyd Thomas sent to the *Christian Commonwealth*, when he was asked to write on the relation of Unitarianism to the New Theology, and such letters as that sent by the Secretary of the National Conference to the *Christian Life* last week will only serve to irritate. Most of us would be very far from glad to get rid of the name Unitarian, have an extremely poor opinion of the proposed substitute Free Catholic, and resent strongly the suggestion that we are approaching "the Boss system," the despot being found at Essex Hall. These are not counsels of peace. The public sense of our denomination will not tolerate attacks on the Unitarian name or on the conscientious and much tried secretary of the Unitarian Association, any more than it will permit the Conference to be made into a rival institution to its parent.

The whole purpose of the amended resolution is to bring our congregations and institutions together for a more vital co-operation, and without attempting to set up any new organisation or develop any existing one except upon legitimate lines, to put before them a practicable ideal, such as they have not yet attained. It seeks to disarm opposition by a frank pronouncement that the Conference makes no ecclesiastical pretensions and does not wish to touch the perfect freedom of the churches; while it also seeks to unite our forces by co-ordinating existing institutions, so that Conference and Unitarian Association, and Stipend Funds and District Associations may work together harmoniously, as they ought to do, for a common purpose. And the intention behind all is to strengthen the weak churches and give a living wage to accredited ministers. Surely, we can all agree upon this as a desirable end, and we can take counsel with one another as to the best means to be employed.

The main purpose of the amendment which appeared in my name, and for which I was only responsible as one of several, was to prevent the Conference from being turned away from its original and legitimate purpose into an ecclesiastical body, collecting funds from and administering financial aid to the churches. To any such proposal as that of a *pro rata* fund from the churches to be handled by the Conference I should offer the strongest possible opposition, and so, I am convinced, would our churches generally. It would have made the beginning of a new Nonconformity among us, or forced such a secession as would have broken up the Conference, which would be a pity. A Methodist Conference is not for us who have been trained in congregational principles, and are devotedly attached to our ancient liberties. But a periodical assemblage of representatives of our churches to confer, to deliberate, to counsel, to stimulate is altogether a different matter. Such an assembly appeals to most of us as a desirable occasion for helping forward great ends, both spiritual and practical. And if such a conference can devise ways of helping the churches to a better ministry, or a better mutual understanding, or a fuller co-operation, it has only to carry the good-will of the churches along with it, and everyone will wish it God speed.

It is quite a misinterpretation of my amendment to say that it meant merely the *status quo*. It certainly did mean arrest of what seemed to be a dangerous development, but it also made urgent appeal to the members of our congregations to rise to the realisation of their duty to the common cause, and to the various institutions and associations to co-operate more heartily than they have hitherto done. If the amendment had been submitted, and carried, a further resolution would probably have followed, instructing the Conference Committee to get into touch with all these bodies and work harmoniously with them for the purpose of strengthening the life of our churches. I am glad to think that the amended resolution will do this, without any sharp division.

May I say in conclusion that it would conduce to the wise guidance and steadying of the Conference if more of our leading

laymen would take an active part in its management as they used to do. At a recent meeting of the Committee, a lay member informs me, there were only four laymen present to 27 ministers! I hope this state of things will be remedied in the election of the new committee, for the whole instinct of our churches is against parsonic domination. C. J. STREET.

Sheffield, March 16, 1909.

In the Rev. W. Mellor's letter last week, par. 3, in references to "Local Church Presbytery," &c., for *Presbytery* read *Session*.

SIR,—The letters which have appeared under this heading show how desirable it is that the subject of organisation should, to borrow the words of Mr. Jones, "be ventilated as far as possible before the meeting at Bolton." Mr. Jones expresses some fears as to the adoption of a system borrowed from a despotic Church, which, if adopted, would, he thinks, in a comparatively short time, "tend to become bureaucratic and dogmatic." To reassure Mr. Jones Mr. Mellor points out that "the Presbyterian Government of our Churches is already nearly complete." Whatever truth there may be in this assertion I fail to see how it should reassure Mr. Jones, for the circuit system is certainly not Presbyterian government. With its hierarchy of three grades in the ministry, the minister of the aided church, the minister of the self-supporting church, and the circuit minister at the top, it violates one of the most precious principles of Presbyterianism. Presbyterianism is constitutional freedom, and some of us, who have had practical experience of its working in Ireland, know how suitable a method it is for the organisation of Free Churches. Many of the English churches are Presbyterian in name, and even retain some Presbyterian organs not quite atrophied; though I am not so certain, as Mr. Mellor is, that "our present Church Committees are the old Presbyterian local Church Presbyteries." Some proof of the existence in the past of such "old Presbyterian local Church Presbyteries" would be interesting.

But, however that may be, not only is the trend of our Free Churches towards Presbyterianism, but the pace has been considerably quickened since Dr. Martineau brought forth his famous scheme at Leeds. Some of us do not regard that as a lost cause, but rather as an ideal towards which we are tending, and because Mr. Wood's scheme of a hybrid Methodism is opposed to that consummation, I, for one, with sincere respect for his experience, ability, and zeal, will do my best to oppose it.

Bridgwater.

C. E. PIKE.

SIR,—Now that the froth is out of the bottle—the metaphor is George Meredith's—it is interesting to watch the animation of the speakers and listen to the argumentative hubbub. If I were the host arranging with good-humoured cynicism merely for the gaiety of our denomination I should like to match Mr. Sydney Jones with Mr. Bodell Smith who writes in your contemporary. They both agree in distrusting the leaders of the Conference, but there the agreement would seem to end. One is full of reforming zeal, of

the spirit of modern democracy with its trust in the goodness and common sense of our people. The other thinks that, unless we now anticipate the dire disaster, our people in the course of a generation or two are quite likely to drift into folly and into a worse than Egyptian bondage. One clamours for a "definitely Unitarian" basis, but the other dreads a hardening into tyrannous dogma. One pleads for "an amicable working arrangement for the unification of all our denominational affairs" and "for the adjustment and co-ordination of our efforts and resources." The other repeats the ancient individualistic fallacies, endorses the anarchic conception of liberty, trembles at the thought of organisation, and urges once more that what we want is life, as if life were only life when it is an invisible and unorganised ether.

A person who had been stoking fires and boiling water until he was all a-sweat might be forgiven some impatience if his plea for a more efficient engine were met with the retort "what you *really* want is more steam." Steam is a powerful thing, but when boilers and cylinders are leaking and steam fizzles wastefully into the air, we need also a better mechanism. Thus we find one section of his critics objecting to Mr. Wood's proposals, because they might weaken the present bureaucracy of the Unitarian Association, the other because they might lead to all kinds of bureaucratic horrors. The arguments cancel each other neatly; they devour each other so remarkably that to borrow from Amos, not even "two legs or a piece of an ear" are left behind in the bloody arena.

Personally I am anxious to accept all the terrors of better organisation and would seek "to arrange the several parts for action and for work, to establish and systematise." I don't quite know what "establish" means in this connection, but I will risk making a present of it to Mr. Jones. No organisation that our people will ever accept can possibly be worse than the present impotent muddle that engenders the fungus of our decay. If our churches were business concerns, Mr. Jones would be the first to advocate a policy of consolidation, economy and efficiency. We have our Augmentation Funds, Sustentation Funds, Ministers' Pension Funds, Ministerial Fellowship, Ministers' Institute, National Conference, B. & F. U. A., our colleges, and dozens of organisations besides overlapping and often obstructing each other. Busy laymen and over-worked ministers scurry about the country attending innumerable committees and boards of trustees, and yet they must forbear from lightening their labours and improving their methods by co-ordinating and unifying their activities into a statesmanlike and efficient scheme of organisation.

Mr. Jones refers to the early church and confuses its progress in organisation with its dogmatic development. The confusion is pardonable because in their actual evolution they went on together. But logically they are clearly distinguishable. Mr. Jones might have proceeded to apply his argument further by objecting to a paid ministry because it led to the sacerdotal priesthood and the papacy; or to the use of the Bible, or the existence of the

Church because it led to the dogma of its infallibility; or to the following of Jesus because it gave rise to the notion of his Deity and so forth. I suppose he refrained from doing this because he does not really want an anarchic type of Christianity, because he does not wish to get back to the exclusively voluntary ministry of peasants and fisher-folk. But if he does not want this, he is committed to organisation, and the only question between us is as to the best and most efficient kind and degree of organisation. He says he knows of "no organisation in any sphere of life which, however lightly the bonds of union may press at first, does not eventually tend to become bureaucratic and dogmatic." I should have thought that this ought to drive him either to submit resignedly if not cheerfully to the inevitable defects of all human organisations, or to a thorough-going anarchy which would repudiate all organised religion and systematised worship. But he believes still, I presume, in political order, in public worship, and in diverse kinds of voluntary associations. He explicitly says that at any rate our district Associations and Assemblies are feasible organisations. That could hardly be otherwise, for happily they exist. But does he find these intolerably bureaucratic and dogmatic? Do these by adopting those "basic principles" which he affirms to be absolutely necessary to the existence of an organisation—do these cease thereby to be "the inheritors and guardians of the Free Tradition?" If they do so cease, why is it that Mr. Sydney Jones still finds it in his heart to support them? If not, why should their further unification and organisation on the same lines and on the same basic principles, administered by the same liberty-loving men, become such a frightful nightmare to him?

Surely it is too late in the day to say that we cannot organise an undogmatic religion. If this contention were true, then indeed the splendid quest of our churches were at an end. But the fatal objection to this amazing contention is the simple one that fortunately it has already been done; that it is here before our eyes; that our churches, our District Associations, our Assemblies, our National Conference with its constitution and rules are in being, living demonstrations of the feasibility of organising a free faith.

As to Mr. Wood's three principles, it might be pointed out that he does not propose to embody his pamphlet as a schedule to the rules of the Conference, that they are principles which, as he says, may be expressed in a score of different ways, that he offers them less as the actual basis of our Church life than as "a sufficiently accurate statement" of that basis for the purposes of his plea for a Federated Church. He asks no one to subscribe to his words, and the suggestion that he does ask this is either an indolent misunderstanding or a disingenuous controversial misrepresentation.

Mr. Jones's final remarks, in which he threatens us with a seceding minority, do not seem very disquieting. There is nothing to prevent such secession now from our District Associations or from the National Conference, except our good sense and the felt need for fellowship, co-

operation, and support in a united Church life. There will be nothing to prevent such secession in the future: but also there will be nothing to justify it.

The reference to the City Temple is an unfortunate one from Mr. Jones's own point of view. Mr. Campbell's threat to secede was made not in the interests of anarchy and independency, but in the interests of a genuine co-operative fellowship. Independency is his last resort, in case the Free Church Council and the Congregational Union should persist in his exclusion. It is not that he wants to leave the Congregational Union, but that he wants his fellowship with that Union, a fellowship which he says has now become "a farce," to become a real and sincere fellowship. If Mr. Jones will read the whole sermon as it appeared in the *Christian Commonwealth*, still better, if he reads Mr. Campbell's further explanation and Mr. Rhondda Williams' article in the issue of March 10, he will understand that Mr. Campbell's main plea is for the co-operation of the City Temple, and for inclusion within the very organisations that now ignore and insult him. He regards secession as a regrettable necessity if this "fellowship" remains an unreal or one-sided one. All this gives added force and opportuneness to everything that our President is urging upon us. If the persecuting narrowness of the Congregational Union or the Free Church Council should drive Mr. Campbell and others out of their respective denominations into independency, it means that there will be around our borders numbers of isolated Liberal Churches which sooner or later will be drawn together into a sympathetic and free fellowship, or which, *if only we have life and efficient organisation enough to receive them*, will be attracted to join us on the basic principles of an undogmatic Christianity. It is only by such an organisation that it is possible to guard and foster the Free Faith in health and power. In the struggle for the survival of religious organisations there is not the remotest chance to-day for the isolated and independent church.

The three pillars of our congregational freedom are (1) that our churches are democratically represented on the Conference, and have absolute control over its present and future development; (2) that the Conference is based on a free and undogmatic religion; (3) that fellowship in the Conference is entirely voluntary, and that any congregation may withdraw at will. In the face of such safeguards it seems to me that to talk of ecclesiastical tyranny is not to offer an argument, but to try to frighten an intelligent people into a panic and turn them into the playthings of unreason.

Nottingham. J. M. LLOYD THOMAS.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

SIR,—In compliance with the request of the Rev. James Harwood I have completed arrangements with the Fleetwood, Liverpool, and Heysham Steamship offices on this side the Channel to issue return tickets—Belfast to Bolton—at a single fare and a quarter (viz., 18s. 7d. 3rd class and saloon instead of 22s. 9d.) available for the outward journey on the 7th (or later), and for the homeward journey

available to arrive in Belfast up to Sunday morning, April 25. Passengers must travel by the same route both ways, and to ensure this special rate must be provided with the usual voucher for presentation (at the time of booking) to the clerk. As far as I can learn the majority of visitors from Ireland to the Conference will travel *via* Fleetwood.

ALEX. O. ASHWORTH.

Cypries Park, Belfast.

March 15, 1909.

LICENSING REFORM.

MR. J. M. GIMSON writes in reply to last week's letter of Mr. F. G. Jackson, denying that he has fallen into any fallacy in saying that no arrests for drunkenness means no drunkenness, and claiming as much reason for his position as for Mr. Jackson's. There for the present the matter must rest. —ED. INQ.

MIDLAND CHRISTIAN UNION.

ANNUAL MEETING.

IN the Old Meeting Church, Bristol-road, Birmingham, the annual meeting of the Midland Christian Union of Presbyterian, Unitarian, and other Non-subscribing Churches was held on Monday. Mr. W. Byng Kenrick, the President, occupied the chair.

The report of the Executive Committee, read by the Rev. A. H. Shelley, stated that in the appeal issued in 1904 it was urged that, in the first instance, more generous help should be given to the aided churches, so that they might have a fair chance of becoming self-supporting, and it was proposed that in place of the system of making grants for an indefinite time a new system should be tried under which the grant in each case would be gradually reduced after a reasonable interval, on the ground that no permanent success could be looked for from any scheme which did not quicken local efforts and make the congregations more dependent on their own resources. This policy had continued to guide the action of the committee. It was not assumed that in every case these efforts would be crowned with success, but the committee were of opinion that this was the fairest working policy, having regard to their obligations to the subscribers to the funds of the Union and to members of the aided churches.

The treasurer's accounts showed that the expenditure for the year had exceeded the ordinary income of the Union by £373 8s. 1d. The whole of this sum, with the exception of £23 12s. 3d. remaining in the bank at the beginning of the year, had been met by a grant from the Priestley Fund amounting to £349 15s. 10d. During the year, however, the Priestley Fund had received in interest on investments and repayment of income tax £174 8s. 3d., and the capital of the fund has therefore only been diminished by £175 7s. 7d.

The PRESIDENT, in moving the adoption of the report and statement of accounts, expressed satisfaction that the work in connection with the enterprises they undertook four or five years ago was on the whole progressing as they anticipated. It was too early yet to state that those enterprises had been carried through as they were started; but, on the other hand,

they were in the position to be able to say that up to the present time they had no absolute failures to record. But in this connection he would again ask them and the bodies they represented to bear in mind what the Union could and what it could not do. They, as an administrative and executive body, could not replace or supply the active local enthusiasm required in the various constituent parts of the body. His idea of the work of the Union was that they should supply where necessary the sinews of war, and also the results of their accumulated experience as to methods of church government and propagandism. What they had done at the centre had been to act as the sturdy beggars for their community, and in doing so they laid down the lines of the policy they thought ought to be adopted in dispensing the money raised. In conclusion the President said it was exactly seven years since he undertook the responsibility of that office, and he thought they should consider the advisability of a change being made at no distant date.

The report and statement of accounts were adopted.

On the proposition of Mr. F. Taylor, Mr. W. Byng Kenrick was re-elected President. The Rev. A. H. Shelley and Mr. E. Ellis Townley were re-elected hon. secretaries.

At a conference held in the afternoon the Rev. Joseph Wood delivered an address on "The Federation of our Churches." It was now, he said, 32 years ago since he first attended a meeting of Unitarians. They were then discussing the condition of their churches, and they had been discussing it ever since. Sometimes they became weary of the subject. As he had said elsewhere, the perpetual feeling of one's pulse in an ecclesiastical sense was apt to have a bad effect. It would be much better to give up talking about their condition and set about doing the work allotted them in the great vineyard. But it was folly not to face the facts. The difficulty was as great as it was 30 years ago. It was then so apparent that it was felt something must be done, and, borrowing an idea from their American friends, a National Conference was established with a view to giving an impetus to the churches—an impetus arising from the closer fellowship of a larger union. It was realised that the condition of their churches was largely bound up with the ministry, and that if they could take steps to secure a more adequate ministry they would be taking the first step towards curing the sad condition of the churches. To this end Sustentation and Pension Funds had been established. Yet the churches were not so well off as they were a few years ago; there was a positive decrease in membership and in annual contributions. While they were people who prided themselves, and rightly so, upon being a forward and progressive people in matters of thought, philosophy and theology, in church methods they were absolutely the most conservative people under the sun. He had had experience of other denominations besides theirs and was quite sure they were less ready to take a forward movement in church methods than any other of the great denominations of Nonconformists. They ought to scrap some of their machinery

or resolve to adapt it to the new conditions of church life in the twentieth century. Out of 350 churches one-third were self-supporting and two-thirds had to be assisted by outside funds. If they had confidence to adapt their methods to a democratic age, and to appeal frankly and boldly to the populace they would, he thought, meet with a wonderful response. They had such a message that the common people would hear them gladly. If the people did not do so it would be the fault of the denomination; it would be because they had not yet learned how to present their message so that it would come home to people, and because they were hampered by church methods which no longer fitted present conditions.

Mr. Wood then proceeded to outline his proposals for better organisation as stated in the paper summarised in last week's INQUIRER.

The PRESIDENT, in opening the discussion, pointed out that the question would have ultimately to be threshed out in detail by the various units of the denomination. There were two parties—those who were satisfied with things as they were and those who were not absolutely satisfied and required progress of some kind or another.

The Rev. C. D. BADLAND said he came to the conference opposed to the scheme of the Rev. J. Wood, but after listening to him that feeling had been considerably modified.

The Rev. W. C. HALL said he should like Mr. Wood to go to the Bolton conference with the assurance of their sympathy and support as to his main proposals. Though he did not like the term circuit he believed that under such a scheme as had been sketched the falling off in their churches would be impossible.

The President then proposed "That the Rev. A. H. Shelley be appointed to represent this Union at the forthcoming National Triennial Conference and, further, that in the opinion of this meeting the time is now ripe for the consideration of a scheme for promoting united action among our churches to a greater extent than at present."

Rev. J. C. STREET, in seconding, said Mr. Wood had approached the subject in a most conciliatory and statesmanlike manner. He had shown that what he wanted to do was to bring the strength of the strong to bear upon the weakness of the weak. He (the speaker) was painfully sensible there were numbers of congregations that were in a pitiable and lamentable condition, and that the status of their ministers was discreditable. If opponents of the scheme would approach the controversy in the same conciliatory way that Mr. Wood had done a *via media* would surely be found.

The Rev. J. W. AUSTIN said he thought the laity would be called upon under a circuit system to make a considerable sacrifice, and that showed the question was one they should think about as seriously as the ministers. Unless they were prepared for disturbance and rearrangement they would get no further than talking about organisation and federation, and what was desired would never become an actuality. They must put aside not only congregational selfishness

but denominational prejudice, and with a single purpose say "Let stand in the way what will, we will bring about some closer co-operation among these individual churches." Out of the present movement he hoped to see grow a strong, far-reaching liberal church.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

In the evening a large congregation assembled in the church when service was conducted by the Rev. J. Worsley Austin, and an eloquent sermon was preached by the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams, of Bradford.

LIVERPOOL DISTRICT MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

THE annual meeting of this Association was held at Hope-street Church Hall on Saturday afternoon, March 13. The Rev. J. C. Odgers (President) in the chair.

The report and accounts of the Committee had been distributed prior to the meeting, and attention was therein drawn to the loss the Association in common with all other societies and congregations had sustained by the deaths of more of those worthy Unitarians who had so nobly worked for the uplifting of their fellow men. In Mr. Robert D. Holt and Mr. Henry W. Gair two most devoted supporters had passed away; but the Committee rejoiced that there were others, and notably young men, ready and willing to come forward and help. At Bootle the Rev. J. Morley Mills had done excellent service and inspired his workers with so great a zeal that difficulties were overcome. The congregation were united, and though perhaps the attendance was not as high as it had been other years, yet the work of the church had been spread over a wider area of adherents, with the result that there are more active members of the church and its allied institutions than ever before. Financially they had paid off all their indebtedness and had invested £150 towards an independence fund. At St. Helens the Rev. J. B. Higham, who ministers there as well as Park-lane, Wigan, has carried forward the cause of Liberal Christianity to the satisfaction of the Committee. The joint pastorate from the point of view of this Association works in every way well. At Garston Mr. Douglas Hoole was the missionary until October, when he entered as a student the Home Missionary College, Manchester. While at Garston he devoted himself to the congregation, and his services were appreciated by them. Since he has left Mr. William Piggott has taken up the cause with all the earnestness and fire of his nature. He has put new life into the congregation, and his missionary zeal is worthy of great praise. At West Kirby the Rev. H. W. Hawkes has carried on that good work which he alone can do, and his devoted services are deeply appreciated. Though the congregation number only 60 or 70 residents, yet Mr. Hawkes is building up a church which should, in time, become as successful as Southport is now. West Kirby is a growing district, and while Mr. Hawkes is there something should be done to mark the permanence of the effort. The report also commended the good work that

was being done at Hamilton-road and Crewe.

The PRESIDENT in moving the adoption of the report and accounts regretted their further loss by the death of Mr. Holbrook Gaskell, who had so lately given a generous donation to the Garston special fund, and since printing the draft report of the committee the Rev. J. Morley Mills had tendered his resignation at Bootle, where he had rendered such valuable services. The President would convey to him the grateful thanks of the Association for all he had done, and would assure him that their goodwill would follow him in the work he is undertaking at Dob-lane, Fails-worth. The Association lately had the pleasure of a visit from the Rev. Joseph Wood, the President of the National Conference, who threw out a suggestion that more missionary work should be done; but in his opinion "their hands seemed very full." The President called special attention to the proposed enlargement of the premises at Hamilton-road, to the purchase of the land at Garston, and the proposed new buildings there. In addition, each of the missionaries was striving for high ideals and touching the hearts of those who had never before come under the influence of our churches. The Association thanked Mr. Wood for his visit, and would assure him that while conscious of their weakness, they were full of energy and hope, and closely united one with another, and that his visit would not be in vain.

Mr. PHILIP H. HOLT seconded, and impressed upon the members the iniquity of the Act of Uniformity (1662), which was doing immense injury even to-day in the religious life of England. The ideal towards which they should all strive was not the maintenance of a sectarianism of their own, but their right to a place in a great national church, free and wide enough to embrace all.

Mr. C. SYDNEY JONES moved the following resolution:—

"That in receiving the report of the Rev. J. Morley Mills, Rev. H. W. Hawkes, Rev. J. B. Higham, and Mr. W. Piggott, the members of this Association record their sense of the great importance of the work for the support of which they are largely responsible, and their earnest sympathy with those who are practically engaged in efforts to extend the influence of a liberal religious life and faith, and are pleased to hear of the good work accomplished at Hamilton-road and Crewe." It was a compliment to Liverpool, he said, that the Rev. Joseph Wood should have expected so much. He would commend to the Committee the work at West Kirby. The Association ought to try and do something to put West Kirby on a permanent basis while Mr. Hawkes was so ably working there; the laity would come forward and help in any scheme that was undertaken.

The Rev. H. D. ROBERTS, seconded, and the resolution having been passed, the Revs. J. Morley Mills, H. W. Hawkes, J. B. Higham, and Mr. Piggott replied. Mr. Mills in thanking them for their continued encouragement and help assured the subscribers and friends that he had always gone away from these meetings full of hope and inspiration, and that he felt the

pain of leaving Liverpool and Bootle after nine years' service.

The Committee was re-elected, and a vote of thanks passed to the President and to the minister and congregation of Hope-street Church for the use of their hall. A very hearty spirit was evidenced and the speeches of the missionaries were exceedingly interesting.

PROVINCIAL LETTER.

THE EASTERN COUNTIES.

It must be, surely, one of the little ironies of Fate that the Provincial Letter from the Eastern Counties should fall to to be written at this time of the year. The north-east wind is in full blast (the south-west is no better in these parts, in my experience); the ground is hard as iron, a fine sleet is falling . . . falling . . . falling. On the birds' table just outside the window six little blue tits and a robin are pecking as for dear life at the cocoa-nuts and bacon-rind; and overhead the gulls, driven inland, wheel and pass.

Yet spring is coming. Even through the slanting sleet I can catch the yellow gleam of the winter aconites; and just there in the corner is a clump of dark green leaves amongst which dear blue hepaticas are peeping. Below all the wintry look of things—"deeper than the hail can smite, deeper than the frost can bite," there is life, warm, budding life.

"Yet a lapse of weeks,

Buds will burst their edges;
Strip their wool-coats, glue-coats, streaks,
In the woods and hedges."

We are quite sure of that—certainly, absolutely sure. Why should we be less sure than Life will re-awaken in our Churches?

After that, I feel I must be careful what I say next, or all the churches in our Union will want to know which are the ones I am making such a fuss about. So I will try to walk circumspectly round about the various walls thereof. For I know very well that any true account of any one of them could only be written from the inside. Whatever I can say can only be the mere impression I get as I try to look in on them, as it were through the windows, from the outside. But I can at least undertake to look in as a sympathiser, and not as a critic.

Bedfield and Framlingham, to begin with, are worked together by our energetic minister, Mr. R. Newell. "We have to preach a gospel that is not popular, that requires some little intelligence on the part of those who embrace it, and no little courage to sustain . . . But though we are cast down, we are not destroyed." Apparently not, indeed! "Our Men's Club and Institute has proved a marked success. Thirty-six members made full use of the new room built and paid for" in 1907. So the last report, amongst other things.

Braintree reports larger congregations in the evenings, and a flourishing Sunday School; and equally declines to "blow trumpets," or to "hang harps on willow-trees." "Which of your Eastern Counties' ministers has the most brains?" queried an outsider. "Well, if one is

fuller of brains than another," was the reply, "it must be Fuller of Braintree. What did you expect?" Anyhow he seems to be able to get folks to his lecture-series, and some of us don't, though our lectures are equally deserving of good audiences. A series is in course of delivery at Braintree now; and amongst the lecturers are Mr. Spedding, and Mr. Jupp of Croydon.

I think Mr. Connell must be congratulated on his work at Bury St. Edmunds; it is most encouraging. He can report increasing attendances at evening service; a prosperous Sunday school; and a successful season with his Band of Hope. The interesting old chapel has been most cleverly dealt with; and in such a manner that, without additional building, and by means of screens which improve rather than detract from the appearance of the interior, two large rooms have been secured "which will be of inestimable value to us in many ways," says Mr. Connell. (The Eastern Union is fortunate in having secured him as their new secretary; there is no doubt whatever that he will be "of inestimable value to them in many ways"; indeed his work for the Union will bear fruit this year in a very unexpected way, as will appear later.) Just now a series of lectures is being given in the renovated chapel; a noteworthy fact in connection with them being that the large bills advertising them are on the notice-boards of all the chapels in the town—Congregational, Baptist, Wesleyan, and Primitive Methodist; "a new thing that pleases us very much," says Mr. Connell, "as it seems to be evidence of a more friendly feeling towards us on the part of the other churches." Whether the friendly feeling increases the attendance at the lectures he does not say; let us hope so.

When I go to Diss, I think on the words, "Then are they glad because they be quiet, for He bringeth them to their desired haven." How delightful is the charming little Quaker-like meeting-house on the edge of its park-like meadow, how soothing the pervading peace of the place! Yet even here a battle is being waged, and a fort being held. The little town is busy enough, and energetic enough, even on the religious side of things, to yield a larger membership to Mr. Birks' ministrations than appears to be the case. But comparing the size of Diss and Diss Chapel with the size of Norwich and the Octagon—if the comparison be not too fatuous—Diss Chapel may be said to be almost crowded.

At Hapton our friend Mr. Rump is able to report an increase in numbers and wider opportunities for good work. Formerly only one service in the afternoon was held on Sunday; Mr. Rump holds one in the evening as well, and the Sunday School meets on Sunday mornings. But "work" at Hapton means much more than is covered by these items of it. The kindly spirit which emanates from the dwellers in the quaint old parsonage, which does not wait for those in need of help to come, but goes out to them in ready personal service—is making itself felt at Hapton; and its living influence will endure long after the "work" has passed into other hands. May that day be far distant!

Ipswich has not yet, I learn, a settled minister. This, considered from the point of view of the scope which an able man might have in a town so large and so progressive, is somewhat astonishing. The President of the Union (accompanied by the Norwich minister) opened a most successful sale of work for the Church in the late autumn of 1908, and found the members full of life and enthusiasm.

Yarmouth (with Filby) has been sadly unfortunate in the loss of Mr. John Birks, who has gone to resume his old pastorate at Taunton; the last information to hand says that the pulpit is being supplied by lay help.

And Norwich—what shall be said of Norwich? What is there not to say of it—with its beautiful new Martineau Memorial buildings, and its lovely and beloved yet nevertheless cruelly draughty old chapel, where you can get a good solid head-cold quite fresh every Sunday morning, and reinforce it every Sunday evening? Fifteen years ago the chapel was the only place the congregation had to meet in, unless (by permission) in one or other of the day schools then connected with the Octagon, the loan and use of which entailed the entire re-arrangement of the school "furniture" before, and the replacing of it after, every meeting. How we used to wrestle with the disadvantages and discomforts of those school-rooms! Now we have our fine hall and Sunday schools, every room of which is in full use on Sunday afternoons, and most of them on Sunday mornings as well; and there is scarcely an evening of the week that several are not occupied. We have been enjoying them for over a whole year now; and we have paid our way for maintenance, and got a balance of income over expenditure. I wish we had paid off that last £150 of the total cost. Instead, we have had to borrow; and though we are making a valiant effort to make up the £150 by the next anniversary of Dr. Martineau's birth, I fear there is little prospect of completing the sum by that time.

Of the many societies which make their home in the new buildings, much might be said did space permit. Mr. Rowe is to be congratulated on the re-starting of two which had been for some time in abeyance, viz., the Young Men's Society and the Literary and Social Union. To the latter he recently gave a masterly exposition of Browning's "The Ring and the Book"; while to the Guild of Service he gave a comprehensive lecture on the poet and his philosophy of life and religion, which has also been given to the Norwich Y.M.C.A. and to the Literary Society of a Congregational Church whose minister is a warm friend of ours, and is giving us a lecture in return on Oliver Wendell Holmes.

In regard to our Sunday schools, numbering somewhere between 350 and 400 strong, what we are and what we hope to be is altogether too absorbing a topic to let one's self loose upon; yet one thing must be noted. Mr. Rowe has started a teachers' preparation class which should prove of simply incalculable value to them. They are nearly all young working men and women; most of them give generously of their free time to other Octagon work; in any case they can have only a microscopic

amount of it to give to preparation for Sunday school lesson. Mr. Rowe meets them fortnightly, and keeps two sets of lessons going, one on the Life of Christ, the other on moral and ethical subjects. They appreciate greatly being able in this way to study with their minister, who realises their difficulties, and helps them, not only to a clearly-outlined lesson, but how to get at the heart of it, and adapt it to the needs of their respective classes.

One other bit of Octagon work perhaps I may be forgiven for naming—the Octagon Girls' Friendly Circle, a week-night class of fifty young women and girls, who learn thereat to sew neatly (and even artistically), to sing tunelessly, and to dance gracefully. That, at least, is what outsiders see. The deeper side of the work is seen in its refining influence on the life and conduct of the members. It was begun just 20 years ago, in the dear company and strong help of one now called elsewhere. Thank God, her influence remains in "lives made better by her presence," and in the faithful and loyal work of younger and exceedingly capable leaders, reinforced now by the addition of Mrs. Rowe as president.

Yet these, after all, are externals. The main concern, the spiritual life of the Church, how shall one speak of that, or with what measure shall it be measured? Perhaps this at least may be said, that if, at some one or other point of the Sunday services, we do not find our hearts and consciences penetrated with the desire to "rise on stepping stones of our dead selves to higher things," it is not the fault of the pastor. Rarely indeed is it given to a minister to possess this penetrating influence in constant measure; for *any* measure of it a congregation do well to be thankful.

We experience the same difficulties as other and larger churches in the way of getting a hearing with the outside public. Mr. Rowe is giving six sermons on Liberal Christianity in March and April. "There are over 100,000 people in Norwich," he says in our March Calendar; "surely including far more of our way of thinking than the small fraction that come to the Octagon. The chapel ought to be filled every Sunday; whose fault is it that it is not—ours, or theirs?"

So, according to my imperfect vision and limited information, goes our Church life in East Anglia. Small handfuls of nevertheless earnest folk, with ministers of the truly heroic type, surely, else how should they have endured until now? With what sort of heart or hope could any of us laymen settle down to minister to a congregation of, say, twenty-five, all told? How much inspiration can the minister be expected to bring to his share of the service; with how much swing can the hymns be made to go? I shall never forget the first time I heard a thousand Unitarians lift up their voices together; it was electrifying; and by far the larger number of the members of these small churches of ours never get to the services of a bigger Unitarian Church than their own. What opportunity it may be possible to offer them in this direction we shall hear when Mr. Connell announces his arrangements for the visit of the Rev. R. J. Campbell to preach at the Octagon on

June 14. "Special facilities" for members of the Eastern Union Churches, let us hope!

As I write these closing words, a shaft of pale golden light shoots across the world, and my pen travels in it perforce. It revives the thought with which I began this letter, the thought of the great life pulsating through the heart of all things, illuminating our hardest tasks, our most lonely moments, kindling again and yet again in us the spark that "disturbs our clod." Truly "the Life is the Light of men." And with our faces set towards it we of the small and lonely churches may well go forward with steadfast hearts.

Norwich.

F. A. MOTTRAM.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

[Notices and Reports for this Department should be as brief as possible, and be sent in by Wednesday, or Thursday Morning at latest.]

Bradford (Farewell).—The Rev. E. Ceredig Jones, M.A., after a ministry of twenty-four years at Chapel-lane Chapel, preached his farewell sermons last Sunday. Though he was now compelled to seek rest, he said in his evening sermon, the past as he recalled it brought no bitterness. His life in Bradford had been a happy one, and he had a feeling of thankfulness that he had been permitted to labour there so long. It was a very great privilege to be on terms of close friendship with so many souls imbued with the religious spirit, and to lead their thoughts week by week to what was best in the whole universe. It was a joy as well as a serious responsibility to guide the young. He thought they all could say they had had a heavy burden to bear, but that he had tried very hard to make it lighter for them. From Chapel-lane there had gone out into the hearts of men and women a sanctifying power that had helped them to keep in the path of duty. He trusted it would be so in the future. For that was their divine mission as a church. It was a society which had for its aim the training of human souls in the art of right living. He was grateful for the succession of faithful workers, and his great comfort in leaving was that the work would still go on. It was his earnest prayer that they might transfer their loyalty to his successor, so that the good cause might flourish. The past twenty-four years, said Mr. Jones, had been a period of steady, unflinching work. For all the churches it had been a time of trial and difficulty, because a wave of excitement and pleasure-seeking had been passing over the country, and not a few had been carried away from religious influences. He thought it was a bad thing for the country; but he was persuaded it was only a passing mood which would in time give place to increased zeal and earnestness. Men and women would come to see that if they meant to preserve the sanctities of life they must keep in closest touch with religious culture. But there had also been at work a great broadening spirit, and the spiritual atmosphere of the community was very different now from what it had been twenty-four years ago. A more humane view of religion was gaining ground everywhere. Most men and women of good sense were prepared to define their religion in these terms, that it meant love to God and love to man. It meant the art of being and of doing good. Mr. Jones went on to speak of the beautiful music at Chapel-lane, and expressed his deep gratification at the way in which the young people had taken their share in the work of the church. On Monday evening a crowded meeting of the congregation was held in Channing Hall to take leave of Mr. Ceredig Jones. Mr. William Thirkill presided, supported by the Revs. W. Rosling, W. R. Shanks, and W. H. Eastlake, and Mr. John Hargreaves (warden) on behalf of the church members presented Mr. Jones with an illuminated address of farewell, and there were other gifts. An editorial in the *Yorkshire Daily Observer* spoke of him as follows:—"With the departure of the Rev. Ceredig Jones and the early leave-taking of the Rev. Rhonda Williams, the religious life of Bradford will

suffer a loss not easily repaired. Both men were a stimulating voice in the pulpit, and although Mr. Jones was not, like Mr. Williams, an aggressive personality in social affairs, he was always to be relied on in support of any good civic movement. He had become one of the familiar personalities of the community, and his courteous, cheerful presence will be much missed by very many who were not of his persuasion. But, naturally, it is his own people who will feel the loss most. The mere fact that he has been among them 24 years is evidence of the strong hold he must have upon their affections. It is pleasant to observe that Mr. Jones looks forward to revisiting them from time to time."

Denton.—A Nations Bazaar was held on March 3, 4, and 6, in the Wilton-street Schools, and proved most successful in every respect, in spite of the very unfavourable climatic conditions. Each stall represented a separate nation, and the attendants were dressed in appropriate costume. The decorations were designed and carried out by the young men connected with the chapel and schools at a total cost of £2 10s. 0d., the whole of the expenses of the bazaar being under £23. The string band organised for the occasion gave their services, many of them were members of the Wilton-street Reed Band. On Wednesday the bazaar was opened by Alderman John Hall Brooks, the chair being taken by Mr. Joseph Linney. On Thursday by County Alderman Lees Broadbent, J.P. (in the absence through illness of Mr. John Harrison), Mr. Leonard New, President of the East Cheshire Christian Union in the chair. On Saturday by Mr. J. A. Middleton, J.P., (Chairman of Denton U.D. Council), Mr. Wm. Wood, J.P., in the chair. A considerable number of local gentlemen representing orthodox churches, including the Rev. Harry Sanman (United Methodist Church) and many of our own neighbouring ministers were present at one or other of the opening ceremonies. Outside the main Congregational stall a large part of the work of the bazaar was carried out by the Sunday school scholars, the elder ones conducting stalls and the younger taking charge of cloak room, museum, fishpond, dip-tubs and an international post office; the preponderance of eager, happy young faces being a pleasing feature in the bazaar. There was a special stall for decorative and household glass which was much admired, and one section of the young men's stall was devoted to Swiss carving and clocks. The chief object of the bazaar was to reduce the debt on the Endowment Fund. The amount raised was £687 0s. 9d. Very hearty thanks are accorded to all friends far and near who have contributed to this most satisfactory result.

Halifax.—Three "At Homes" were held last week in the Northgate-end Chapel Schoolroom. Enjoyable programmes of music were provided by members themselves on the first evening, and on the second by singers from other Nonconformist churches, and the third was a children's night. There was an excellent refreshment stall, and the gross receipts were about £30. The nett amount will be given to the sewing society and to the cost of alterations to the organ.

London: Deptford.—The Rev. A. J. Marchant is to preach his farewell sermon to-morrow (Sunday) evening, prior to his removal to Chichester, and on Wednesday evening, at 7, a farewell meeting will be held.

Loughborough.—On Sunday morning the Rev. W. H. Burgess spoke of the tragic fate of the brothers Walter, Thomas and Bartholomew Legate, the last of whom suffered martyrdom by fire at Smithfield on March 18, 1612. Dark and handsome in person, confident in bearing, skilled in the Scriptures and unblameable in life Bartholomew Legate belonged to that sturdy and reverent middle class to which England owes so much. The affinities of his belief with that of the Quakers on the one hand and the Unitarians on the other were pointed out.

Newport (I.W.).—The congregation has lost a faithful member by the death of Mr. Henry Shepard, who exerted himself to attend the welcome meeting to the Rev. J. Ruddle as recently as Feb. 24, and attended the service in the church on the last Sunday of his life. He died on March 6 at the ripe age of 76. The local papers speak of him as a man of considerable culture and wide reading; and he was closely identified with the musical life of the

town. For many years he had been honorary trustee of the I.W. Savings Bank. In quiet, unpretending ways he did good, and will be long remembered. At the funeral in Carisbrooke Cemetery the choir of the Unitarian church sang the hymn "When the day of toil is done," the Rev. J. Ruddle conducting the service.

Stannington (Welcome).—A most successful married men's evening in the Underbank Schoolroom, on March 1, was made the occasion of a hearty welcome to Mr. Leonard Short, who entered upon his duties as minister of the chapel in the new year. After tea, of which upwards of 160 partook, the chair was taken by Mr. W. Lomas, who in opening the proceedings, referred to the good work accomplished by the late Rev. Iden Payne, who was healer of the sick and minister of the people for twenty years amongst them. He set a good example for all who followed, and was an angel of mercy in many a home. The Rev. C. J. Street said the word angel meant a messenger. He had no doubt that Mr. Short would have glad tidings for all the people. He was sure he would work in harmony with everybody in the village. He wanted very much to congratulate them on the choice they had made. He knew the good work Mr. Short had done as lay preacher, and he came of a good family. He wished to point out to the congregation the responsibility they had undertaken in the matter. They would have to give Mr. Short leisure, so that he might pursue his studies. They would have this sacrifice to make until the time was past for preparation. Then when the issue was successful which he firmly anticipated, they would credit Stannington with being so discerning as to recognise and help forward to the ministry one who would further strengthen the cause which they had at heart. He quite expected that to happen, and in conclusion wished them "God speed" in their future work. The Rev. A. H. Dolphin said as minister at Uppertorpe he had seen a good deal of the work accomplished by Mr. Short. He could assure the people of Stannington they had got a good man, one who was interested and enthusiastic in his work. The Rev. J. W. Cock and Mr. J. E. Bradwell (representing the Lay Preachers' Union) also joined in the congratulations and good wishes. Mr. S. Sellars, representing the Wesleyans of Stannington, said it was not the first time he had spoken in that schoolroom. The meetings which he had attended were principally political gatherings, where they were perhaps of more than one opinion, and not afraid of expressing that opinion. They would be all of one mind that night in welcoming Mr. Short in their midst. Mr. L. Short, in reply, thanked them all very heartily for their kind reception. Mr. Street had reminded them of their responsibility which they had undertaken. He could say he fully realised his responsibility, and with God's help he would try and justify their confidence. He realised that to do any good he must gain their affection, and that he would try to do. He pleaded for unity in the church, unity of spirit, unity of aim. They had a responsibility as Unitarians to uphold, and people would judge them by their works. He would try and make his message a message of love, hope and joy. After the usual vote of thanks an enjoyable programme was submitted, consisting of songs, original recitations, and a humorous sketch entitled "A Strange Coincidence." The chapel funds will benefit to the amount of £8 9s.

OUR CALENDAR.

It is requested that notice of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday Afternoon.

SUNDAY, March 21.

LONDON.

Acton, Creffield-road, 11.15, Rev. ARTHUR HURN; 7, Rev. W. E. WILLIAMS, B.A.
Bermondsey, Fort-road, 7, Rev. J. HIPPERSON.
Blackfriars Mission and Stamford-street Chapel, 11 and 7.
Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 and 7, Rev. G. C. CRESSEY, D.D.
Child's Hill, All Souls', Weech-road, Finchley-road, 11.15 and 6.30, Rev. EDGAR DAFLYN.
Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-road, 11, Rev. J. C. BALLANTYNE; 7, Rev. W. J. JUPP.

Deptford, Church-street, 6.30, Rev. A. J. MARCHANT.
Essex Church, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate, 11 and 6.30, Rev. FRANK K. FREESTON.
Forest Gate, corner of Dunbar-road, Upton-lane, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. BODELL SMITH.
Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-place, 11.15 and 7, Rev. H. RAWLINGS, M.A.
Hampstead, Rosslyn-hill Chapel, 11.15 and 6.30, Rev. H. GOW, B.A.
Harlesden, N.W., Willesden High School, Craven Park, 7, Rev. J. ARTHUR PEARSON.
Highgate-hill, Unitarian Christian Church, 11 and 7, Rev. A. A. CHARLESWORTH.
Ilford, Unitarian Christian Church, High-road, 11, Mr. R. W. PETTINGER; 7, Rev. J. C. BALLANTYNE.
Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 and 7, Rev. E. SAYELL HICKS, M.A.
Kentish Town, Clarence-road, N.W., 11 and 7, Rev. F. HANKINSON.
Kilburn, Quex-road, 11 and 7, Rev. CHARLES ROPER, B.A.
Lewisham, Unitarian Christian Church, High-street, 11 and 7, Rev. W. W. C. POPE.
Little Portland-street Chapel, 11.15 and 7, Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.
Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 7, Rev. GORDON COOPER.
Peckham, Avondale-road, 11, Rev. JESSE HIPPERSON; 6.30, Rev. D. DELTA EVANS.
Richmond, Free Church, Ormond-road, 11.15, Rev. G. CRITCHLEY, B.A.; 3.30, Mrs. G. H. EDWARDS.
Stoke Newington Green, 11.15 and 7, Dr. F. W. G. FOAT.
Stratford Unitarian Church, 11, P.S.M., Mr. W. J. NOEL; 6.30, Mr. E. WILKES SMITH.
Wandsworth Unitarian Christian Church, East Hill, 11 and 7, Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
Wimbledon, Smaller Worple Hall, 11.15, Rev. W. E. WILLIAMS, B.A.; 7, Rev. ARTHUR HURN.
Wood Green, Unity Church, 11 and 7, Rev. Dr. MUMMERY.
Woolwich, Carmel Chapel, Anglesea-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. L. JENKINS JONES.

ABERYSTWYTH, New Street Meeting House, 11 and 6.30, E. GLYN EVANS.
BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. McDOWELL.
BLACKPOOL, Dickson-road, North Shore, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. ROBERT MCGEE.
BLACKPOOL, South Shore Unitarian Free Church, Lytham-road South, 11 and 6.30.
BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West Hill-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. C. C. COE.
BRIGHTON, Free Christian Church, New-road, 11 and 7, Rev. PRIESTLEY PRIME.
BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. GEORGE STREET.
CANTERBURY, Ancient Chapel, Blackfriars, 10.50, Rev. J. H. SMITH.
CHESTER, Matthew Henry's Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. D. JENKIN EVANS.
DOVER, Adrian-street, near Market-square, 11 and 6.30, Rev. C. A. GINEVER, B.A.
DUBLIN, Stephen's Green West, 12, Rev. G. HAMILTON VANCE, B.D.
GUILDFORD, Ward-street Church, North-street, 11 and 6.30, Mr. GEORGE WARD.
HASTINGS, South Terrace, Queen's-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. S. BURROWS.
HORSHAM, Free Christian Church, Worthing-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. J. MARTEN.
LEEDS, Mill Hill, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. C. HARGROVE, M.A.
LEICESTER, Free Christian Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. KENNETH BOND.
LEICESTER, The Great Meeting, 11 and 6.30, Rev. EDGAR I. FRIPP, B.A.
LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 and 6.30, Rev. CHARLES CRADDOCK.
LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. D. ROBERTS.
LIVERPOOL, Ullet-road, Sefton-Park, 11, Rev. J. C. ODGERS, B.A.; 6.30, Rev. M. WATKINS.
MAIDSTONE, Unitarian Church, Earl-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. FARQUHARSON.
NEW BRIGHTON and LISCARD, Memorial Church, Manor-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. ERNEST PARRY.
NEWPORT, Isle of Wight, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. RUDDIE.
OXFORD, Manchester College, 11.30, Rev. L. P. JACKS, M.A.
PORTSMOUTH, High-street Chapel, 11 and 6.45, Rev. JAMES BURTON, M.A.

PORTSMOUTH, St. Thomas-street, 6.45, Rev. T. BOND.
 SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. J. S. MATHERS, M.A.
 SEVENOAKS, Bessell's Green, The Old Meeting House, 11, Rev. J. F. FARMITER.
 SHEFFIELD, Upper Chapel, 11, Rev. C. J. STREET, M.A.; 6.30, Rev. J. W. COCK.
 SIDMOUTH, Old Meeting, High-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. WILLIAM AGAR.
 SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. MATTHEW R. SCOTT.
 TAVISTOCK, Abbey Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. RATTENBURY HODGES.
 TORQUAY, Unity Hall, Lower Union-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. E. O'CONNOR, B.D.
 TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Dudley Institute, Dudley-road, 11.
 WEST KIRBY, Tynwald Hall, opposite Station (side door), 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. W. HAWKES

GERMANY.

HAMBURG, The Church of the Liberal Faith, Logenhaus, Welckerstrasse, 11. Rev. GARDNER PRESTON.

SOUTH AFRICA.

CAPETOWN, Free Protestant (Unitarian) Church, Hout-street, 6.45, Rev. RAMSDEN BALMFORTH.

DEATHS.

KINDER.—On March 6, at 20, Gayton-road, Hampstead, Emma Kinder, daughter of the late Robert Kinder, aged 96.
 NICHOLSON.—On March 11, at Ellerhow, Wilmslow, Cheshire, Mary Anne, widow of the late J. Holme Nicholson, M.A., aged 84 years.
 PAGET.—On March 14, at his residence in West Walk, Leicester, Alfred Henry Paget, F.R.I.B.A., younger son of the late Alfred Paget, J.P., of Leicester, aged 61.

Unitarian Church, Accrington.

In May, this congregation will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of its existence, and has decided to mark the event by declaring itself independent of support from the North-East Lancashire Mission, and by undertaking much needed repairs and decoration of the church building.

£1,500 is required to ensure an income sufficient to replace the present annual grant from the N. E. L. Mission, and a further £250 for the repairs and decoration.

The congregation being small and consisting chiefly of working people, has exhausted its own means, and therefore has now to rely upon the generosity of the Unitarian public.

From the list given below, it will be seen that the first-named object has been accomplished, and an earnest appeal is now made for the remaining £150 to complete the second portion of the scheme in time for the Jubilee celebrations on May 1.

Amount already promised:—

Legacy from the late Mrs. Helen Grundy	£500	0	0
North East Lancs. U. Mission	250	0	0
Accrington Congregation	568	7	6
Friends outside Accrington	253	6	9
British and Foreign Unitarian Association (for repairs and decorations)	25	0	0

Donations will be thankfully received and gratefully acknowledged by any of the following: Rev. J. Islan Jones, B.A., 7, Avenue-parade, Accrington, Minister; J. E. Wilde, 23, Mount-terrace, Accrington, Treasurer; A. Webster, 28, Rock Mount, Accrington, Secretary.

UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL Oldham.

BAZAAR, Thursday and Saturday, April 1 and 3, 1909. To be opened on Thursday, at 3 p.m., by Councillor T. B. Taylor, Esq., of Oldham. Saturday, at 3 p.m., by the Right Hon. ALFRED EMMOTT, M.P. Money or goods will be thankfully received by the Secretary, WALTER ARMSTRONG, 343, Park-road, Oldham.

UNITARIAN CHURCH, King William Street, Blackburn.

SALE OF WORK.

The Committee of the Blackburn Unitarian Church, in conjunction with the Ladies' and Men's Guilds, are arranging to hold a Sale of Work on March 25 and 27, by which they are in hopes of raising at least £50 towards a Building Fund.

The Congregation feel that in the hired rooms they now occupy, they are seriously hampered by want of room for both Church and School work.

Contributions in goods or money will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Rev. E. W. Sealy, M.A., 373, Revidge-road (Minister); Mrs. Elliott, 91, Palmer-street (Secretary Ladies' Guild); Miss Evans, 67, Canterbury-street (Treasurer Ladies' Guild); Mr. G. W. Pemberton, "Elleray," Merlin-road (Chairman); Mr. G. Ainley, 40, Lynwood-road (Treasurer Men's Guild); or by

W. H. RIGBY, Hon. Sec. (pro tem.) 12, Queen's Park-terrace.

UNITARIAN CHURCH, King William Street, Blackburn.

SALE OF WORK

to be held in the Church Rooms on Thursday and Saturday, March 25 and 27, 1909.

To be opened at 3 o'clock on Thursday by Andrews Crompton, Esq., of Rivington (Chairman, T. Harwood, Esq., of Bolton); and at 3 o'clock on Saturday, by Henry Pilling, Esq., of Blackburn (Chairman, Rev. E. W. Sealy, M.A., of Blackburn).

Entertainments, Vocal and Instrumental Selections, "Sleeping Beauty," Refreshments. Admission: Adults 6d., Children 3d.

RICHMOND HILL CHURCH, ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

£1,300 to be raised.

A GRAND SCENIC BAZAAR, representing "Our Indian Empire," will be held in the Town Hall, Ashton-under-Lyne, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 25, 26, and 27, 1909.

First Day at 2.30 p.m.

Opener: Sir Edwin Durning Lawrence, Bart. Chairman: Ald. John Hall Brooks, of Hyde.

Second Day at 2.30 p.m.

Opener: Hugh Dean, Esq., of Gorton. Chairman: Colonel J. W. Pollitt, V.D., J.P.

Third Day at 2.30 p.m.

Opener: C. Sydney Jones, Esq., M.A., of Liverpool. Chairman: W. Owen, Esq. J.P., of Hale, Cheshire.

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MANSFORD STREET CHURCH AND MISSION.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of friends and subscribers will take place in the Chapel on Tuesday, March 23.

Tea and coffee in the Schoolroom, at 7.15 p.m. Chair to be taken at 8.0 by JOHN HARRISON, Esq., President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

S. W. PRESTON } Secretaries.
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Blackfriars Mission and Stamford St. Chapel.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of Subscribers and Friends will be held at 7.45 p.m., on Tuesday, March 30, at Stamford Street Chapel, S.E., when the Rev. Hy. Gow, B.A., of Hampstead, will preside. Tea, to which Friends are cordially invited, will be provided at 7 p.m.

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THE TRIENNIAL GENERAL

MEETING of Members of the Fund will be held in Bank-street Schools, Bolton, on Tuesday, April 20, at 12.30 p.m. Four Managers are to be elected, to serve for a term of nine years. Nominations must reach me five clear days before the date named.

C. J. STREET, Hon. Sec.

LONDON DISTRICT UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.

MEETING OF THE YOUNG

PEOPLE of the Churches, Essex Hall, Saturday, April 3, 7 p.m. PERCY PRESTON, Esq., will preside.

Dr. S. A. ELIOT, of the American Unitarian Association, and others will speak. Calendars please copy.

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